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The Shape of Things

THE GERMAN AND FINNISH ARMIES SEEM TO be closing in on Leningrad, and despite the tenacity of the Soviet defenders the city is in grave danger. With the Finns moving in on its rear along the eastern shore of Lake Ladoga, the Soviet High Command must face the problem of whether to order Marshal Voroshilov to evacuate his troops while there is yet time or to risk locking up a large garrison in the city in the hope that a prolonged stand there would further upset the Nazi timetable. In his cable on page 215 Louis Fischer refers to the industrial importance of Leningrad. Its strategic significance is equally great, for if it falls, the Russian Baltic fleet will be forced either to scuttle or to surrender. Another consequence will be the cutting of communications between Moscow and the Arctic ports of Murmansk and Archangel, through which some kind of connection has been maintained with Britain. Occupation of the Leningrad area would also present Hitler with an opportunity to make a flanking movement against Moscow in conjunction with a new push on the central front. However, it is just in this region that the Red Army has launched a counter-offensive which, the latest reports indicate, is developing formidable proportions. If Marshal Timoshenko is able to throw back the Nazis in the Smolensk district, while Leningrad continues to resist, it will be the turn of the German commanders to look to their right flank.

*

HITHERTO NAZI OPERATIONS IN RUSSIA have benefited little, if at all, from fifth-column aid. For years prior to his onslaught on the Soviets Hitler had cultivated the Ukrainian nationalists, and he also has under his thumb a small group of czarist exiles with headquarters in Berlin. But even Dr. Goebbels has not been able to paint pretty pictures of the German army advancing into the Ukraine amid the delighted cheers of the populace. And there have been no reports from any source indicating the emergence of quislings in the conquered Russian provinces. However, Moscow has become anxious about one potential fifth column, at present very far from the fighting front—the large German colony which has long been settled on the Volga. According to a decree

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signed by Mikhail I. Kalinin, President of the U. S. S. R., evidence of disloyalty and espionage by many of these Germans has been accumulated by the military authorities. Consequently another of the tragic migrations which have accompanied World War II has been ordered, and nearly 400,000 Volga Germans are to be moved into the heart of Siberia, where new lands are being assigned to them. This drastic action, with winter approaching, is bound to cause great suffering. But in view of the way in which the Nazis have used German colonies in the Balkans to assist their aggressions, the Soviet government can hardly be blamed for taking strong measures.

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THE MOST THAT CAN BE SAID FOR THE TAX bill passed last week by the Senate is that it is slightly better than the House bill. Its chief advantage lies in the fact that it will produce some $3,600,000,000 in revenue as compared with the $3,200,000,000 provided by the House measure. The additional $400,000,000, though small in comparison with projected federal expenditures of more than $20,000,000,000, should aid appreciably in the struggle to retard inflation. Most of the additional funds are to be provided by lowering the income-tax exemptions from $2,000 and $800, for married and single persons, respectively, to $1,500 and $750. This change, though regrettable in some respects, is defensible as an emergency measure. But it is difficult to justify it in view of the inadequate levies on excess profits and estates. As Senator La Follette has pointed out, the Senate bill would raise only 15 per cent of federal revenue from excess-profits taxes as compared with 45 per cent raised by this means in 1920. The taxes on estates are absurdly low. As the bill stands, an unmarried factory worker would pay a heavier tax on $100 a month earned in wages than a wealthy man would pay on a $41,000 inheritance. This makes a travesty of the President's assurance that the next taxes would be levied on the basis of capacity to pay.

✶

WE APPLAUD THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION IN establishing a new division in the OPM to deal with subcontracting and the conversion of civilian facilities to defense production. The executive order setting up a new division of contract distribution on a par with priorities, labor production, raw materials, and civilian supplies is all the more welcome because it came so soon after the OPM, by a reshuffle of its own, had sought to give the public the impression that a fundamental reform had occurred in subcontracting. On the appointment of Floyd Odlum to head this new division we suspend judgment. His unconventional career in finance and business and the friendships he has won among the New Dealers lead us to hope that his attitude will not be that of a typical big business man. We must stop running the defense program on a monopolistic basis, with huge backlogs in the hands of a comparatively few companies, if production is to be speeded up, idle machine power brought into play, and civilian industry and labor saved from "priorities unemployment." Odlum's first move to win public confidence must be to get rid of Robert L. Mehornay, the Kansas City furniture dealer, who has been a dismal failure in the job of stimulating wider subcontracting. A similar shake-up in the War Department's subcontracting service provides additional ground for hope of forthright action at last in this most vital sector of defense.

✶

THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PRODUCTION of military planes in August passed the 1,850 mark comes as a welcome surprise after the discouraging figures of recent months. While far from the 50,000 planes a year asked for by the President, this is more than three times the number produced in August, 1940, and is twice the output of six months ago. Precise figures on the proportion of bomber, fighter, and trainer planes produced in August have not been released, but it may be assumed that the increase is largely in combat planes. It is known that several models of bombers and fighter planes are just getting into large-scale production, and further substantial increases in the output of these types are expected shortly. Although the prospects for production are distinctly more encouraging than they have seemed in the past few months, they are still disheartening when compared with the pressing needs of Britain, China, and the Soviets, to say nothing of our own armed forces. It is generally agreed, for example, that a few hundred first-class bombers could turn the tide of war in China and effectively destroy the threat of further Japanese aggression. But so far we have not been able to spare any heavy bombers for either China or Russia and have delivered comparatively few to Britain. From this point of view the Battle of Production is still running against us.

✶

JUSTICE HOLMES IN THE SO-CALLED "PIPE-line cases" said that ownership of the pipe lines enabled the major oil companies to control the fields "without the necessity of owning them." The man who owns the well must sell at the terms they offer or be unable to transport his oil to market. This explains the anxiety of the great oil companies to build new pipe lines rather than to revive the use of railroad tank-car transportation. The oil monopoly ever since the older Rockefeller's day has been built on control of the means of transportation, and the pipe line is more easily controlled than the tank car. These are the real issues behind the quarrel over the oil-transportation shortage in the East and the reluctance of

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the oil companies to settle it by using idle cars, barges, and pipe lines now engaged in carrying gasoline west from the Eastern seaboard when they could be carrying gasoline east. John J. Pelley, president of the American Association of Railroads, told the Senate committee investigating the oil shortage that 20,000 tank cars are available, and there is now hope that they will be used and the artificially high rates exacted for their use reduced. We believe that precious steel supplies should not be diverted to pipe-line construction until all alternative methods of meeting the transportation shortage have been tried.

*

NEGOTIATIONS WITH MEXICO NOW HAVE reached the point where an early settlement of all outstanding issues between it and this country is confidently predicted. Arrangements have been completed for granting Mexico a loan of from $50,000,000 to $100,000,000 to stabilize its currency and complete the pan-American highway. Although the two matters are not definitely linked, it is understood that the Mexican government will use a part of the foreign exchange thus obtained to make initial payments to the American oil companies for the properties commandeered some years ago when the companies refused to accept an arbitration award in a labor dispute. The remaining payments are to be made in oil over a period of years. A somewhat similar arrangement is expected with the British oil companies. Although some conservative financial interests profess to be horrified at the immorality of such a settlement, it offers a realistic solution to what has been one of the knottiest problems of pan-American relations. As it works out, neither Mexico nor the United States has had to give way on what it regarded as a matter of principle. Both will receive tangible benefits from the arrangement. And, what is most vital, the agreement will contribute substantially to the strengthening of hemisphere defenses.

*

THE LIVES OF THREE ALLEGED COMMUNISTS have been exacted by the German military authorities in Paris as the price of a minor wound suffered by a German non-commissioned officer. The victims of this blood sacrifice appear to have been selected at random from the thousands of hostages recently rounded up in occupied France. There is no evidence that they were Communists, but the Nazis continue to harp on the Communist theme in the vain hope that the French people may be persuaded that this suppressed party is the only source of opposition to collaboration. Actually, we can be certain, the methods of terrorism by which the Germans are now trying to crush the spirit of France will only result in the tightening of the opposition against them and the handful of French traitors who have sold out to the "New Order." What is more, every "Communist" executed is likely to become a martyr and the influence of the party greatly enhanced. Among the acknowledged Communists now threatened by a death sentence is Gabriel Peri, former deputy and scholarly foreign editor of *l'Humanité*, who is being brought to trial before the special court which has been created by the Vichy government as an earnest of its desire to cooperate with the Nazis in suppressing the French people.

*

ON SEPTEMBER 4 THE NEW YORK *TIMES* published a Washington dispatch of which the first three paragraphs read as follows:

> The United States is letting Spain have large quantities of petroleum products as part of an effort to prevent Spain's entrance into the war on the side of the Axis, it was learned today.
>
> A steady stream of Spanish tankers has been calling at Port Arthur, Texas, picking up large oil and gasoline cargoes for transport to Bilbao, Santander, Barcelona, and Malaga.
>
> These oil shipments, which were particularly heavy in late August, have been sanctioned by the State Department.

By a happy, but by no means surprising, coincidence the Spanish Phalangist paper *Arriba* on the same day published two of the most violent anti-American editorials of the year. They carried these eloquent headlines: "Roosevelt, Satellite of Stalin," and "Roosevelt and the Last Days of the Power of Gold." A few lines from the chief editorial indicate its point of view:

> Let us pass over the campaigns of the United States in Cuba, the Philippines, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Puerto Rico to deal with the actuality of today. As repulsive as the way in which Eden perverts the truth, we find Roosevelt's invocation to freedom and religion, used by him as a cover for aid to the Soviets.

The flow of vituperation from fascist Spain seems to be wasted on the State Department; it won't take no for an answer.

Our New Board

TOO often, in our opinion, do contributing editors serve as ornaments on a masthead rather than as active participants in the affairs of the journals which proudly display their names. Too seldom do they either contribute or edit. We hesitate to draw illustrations from our own respectable past, but we seem to recall a day when a junior editor discovered the name of Anatole France on *The Nation's* list of contributing editors at a date considerably after the demise of that distinguished author. A faint hope that we may be mistaken restrains us from checking our memory by reference to the files. In any case

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the incident, apocryphal or true, suggests the quiescent role frequently assigned by journals to the eminent persons who are presented to the public as collaborators.

This week *The Nation* takes pride in announcing the appointment of a board of five contributing editors whose decorative qualities will in no way interfere with their active functions as writers and advisers. All of them today write either regularly or frequently for the paper. In their new capacity as editors they will provide the additional benefits that come from constant consultation and more carefully planned and integrated contributions.

The five persons who have agreed to serve on the new board are Norman Angell, Jonathan Daniels, Louis Fischer, Reinhold Niebuhr, and J. Alvarez del Vayo. Their names will be added to the masthead next week.

These men bring to *The Nation* very diverse qualities of mind and experience. In the period just ahead, when American foreign policy will assume more momentous importance every day, we welcome particularly the intimate knowledge of international affairs possessed by the two Europeans, Norman Angell and J. Alvarez del Vayo, as well as by Louis Fischer, who for so many years served as *The Nation's* chief correspondent in Russia and other parts of the Continent. Norman Angell will regularly write editorials on foreign affairs and, less regularly, signed articles in the same field; J. Alvarez del Vayo will devote special attention to the problems of the Latin countries, in Europe and America, and will contribute frequent articles on developments in both hemispheres. Louis Fischer, at present in London, promises a regular page on his return, to be called, like his recent successful autobiography, Men and Politics.

But foreign affairs, while they overshadow all else, do not diminish but rather increase and complicate domestic problems. The war is in our midst, and both Reinhold Niebuhr and Jonathan Daniels are primarily concerned with the social and political adjustments in America made necessary by the struggle in Europe. Mr. Daniels, whose page, A Native at Large, will continue in the months to come, has made himself, to use his own words, "a kind of watchman against the phony aspects of democracy at a time when we are talking so big and loud about democracy." He will write from various parts of the country, keeping a particularly close eye on defense activities as they affect ordinary people, workers and soldiers in the training camps and local politicians, as well as the people who run things in Washington.

Reinhold Niebuhr is a philosopher in politics. He is concerned with the play of forces—emotional as well as social and economic—in public action. He will write about opinion and behavior and policy from the point of view of a person who knows that the struggle in Europe is not only "our war" but a war which must be as decisively won in America—in every factory and government office—as on the Continent and the Atlantic.

The Nation has a complicated task to perform in the months to come. It will continue to support every aggressive, intelligent move against the armed power of the dictators; and at the same time it will attack the tendencies in our own country which stand in the way of a truly democratic victory. Our new contributing editors were chosen because they have so fully identified themselves with this purpose. They are not merely eminent as writers and thinkers. They are also fighters. And they join the staff as active participants in the many-sided struggle for the survival of freedom and the creation of a democratic world to which *The Nation* is unalterably committed.

After the Greer

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

UNOFFICIALLY the Germans say that war with the United States has begun. The United States destroyer Greer, according to the Nazi version, attacked a German submarine; the submarine attempted to torpedo the destroyer; the United States navy was then ordered to hunt the submarine and "eliminate" it. This was an act of war, say the Germans.

One need not accept the Nazi statement of facts. We have the President's word that the submarine initiated the attack, launching several torpedoes at the Greer deliberately, in clear daylight; and that the Greer responded with several depth charges. We naturally accept his account in preference to that of the congenital liars in Berlin. But however reckless they may be in dealing with facts, one cannot contradict their conclusion. Who shot at whom first is almost beside the point. What is important is that an American destroyer and a German submarine met in battle; we are not yet at war with Germany, but an act of war—"shooting war"—has been committed.

It was not to be indefinitely avoided. Hitler obviously has hoped to put off the hour of combat; he has had no desire to become involved in an extension of the war in the Atlantic while his strength on land was being drained into the Russian earth. But on the other hand he could not afford to permit the American sea patrol to cut down British losses to a point low enough to make replacement possible. For if that point were reached and maintained, the British would have won the Battle of the Atlantic. In the last two months, since the extension of the American patrol to Iceland, British losses have dropped to their lowest level in more than a year.

The attack on the Greer was at once an answer to the growing effectiveness of the patrol and a test of American opinion. The torpedo that was launched in the general direction of the American destroyer was an emis-

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sary from the German High Command. It carried a message reading: "We've had about enough of your interference with our blockade. This is a warning. If you don't want war, you'd better mind your own business; and we don't think you want war."

But such a message would not have been sent at all if Germany were not ready to face the consequences in case its challenge should be taken up. It took a genuine risk in order to make its position clear. And it would not do so if it did not feel that the flow of American goods safely reaching the fighting fronts was sufficient to endanger the Nazi position. If Germany can scare the United States into relaxing its vigilance, however unobtrusively, so that Nazi raiders can operate with better success and restore the proper percentage of sinkings, then the gesture will have been worth any risk. If the attempt fails, then Hitler will perforce accept war.

Now the American people don't want war, as our isolationists are forever announcing. And so it may be possible for the Nazis to persuade themselves that a real chance still exists of frightening the United States government into a change of policy. The Nazi press simultaneously attacks President Roosevelt as a liar and *provocateur,* and reports with satisfaction the "indifference" over the Greer incident displayed by the American public. But if the German government decides to base its policy on such haphazard speculations, it will meet with a severe shock. Americans are overwhelmingly committed to the policy of helping the powers resisting Nazi aggression—Britain in particular. This policy has been adopted by Congress and implemented through the Lend-Lease Act. The occupation of Iceland and the patrol of the ocean highways, challenged directly by the submarine attack on the Greer, had almost unanimous support in Congress and the press; and public-opinion polls have registered strong popular sentiment in favor of both. News of the attack on the Greer was received less with indifference than with matter-of-fact acceptance of the fortunes of war. When a nation sends its warships out into the sea lanes to protect war cargoes from marauding raiders, it discounts the consequences in advance. Under such circumstances an "incident" is in the normal course of events and creates neither alarm nor indignation. Such sentiments are reserved for the reign of piracy that made the patrol necessary and an attack likely.

The United States did not send its warships out into Hitler's "blockade" zone to avoid risks; it sent them exactly because the risks are there and, if our major policy of aid to Britain is to be carried into effect, must be faced rather than dodged.

This is, of course, the only possible reply to the message carried by the torpedo. It will undoubtedly be made by the President this week. The United States neither seeks war nor avoids it. Our purpose is to safeguard the shipments of vital war materials which we have pledged ourselves to produce and deliver to Britain. If Germany decides that our purpose is being carried out with sufficient success to interfere seriously with its contrary aims, then presumably it will try to sink the ships of our patrol. Our answer will be to try to sink its raiders, preferably before they have an opportunity to attack. If this means war, it will be a war that the American people will both understand and support. Of that Hitler may be certain, no matter what Messrs. Wheeler and Lindbergh may tell him to the contrary.

Konoye's Terms

SPECIFIC news is lacking regarding the negotiations between the United States and Japan since the President's receipt of the extraordinary personal note from Premier Konoye. But such information as has leaked out in Tokyo and elsewhere justifies the pessimistic interpretation in I. F. Stone's Washington letter. The appeasers seem firmly in the saddle in the State Department. There is no disposition to force Japan to demonstrate the sincerity of its supposed change of heart by forcing it to withdraw from its recently conquered territory before negotiations are carried on. On the contrary, a real danger exists that Konoye's terms will be accepted, in part if not in whole.

Konoye is believed to have promised Japanese evacuation of Indo-China and the abandonment of Tokyo's program of expansion into the South Seas in return for a restoration of normal trade relations with the United States and the use of our influence in settling the Chinese war on Japan's terms. These terms are reliably said to include the removal of Japanese troops from Central and South China, establishment of a puppet regime in the Peiping-Tientsin area, and an agreement for economic "cooperation" between Japan and free China. In exchange for these concessions, Konoye asks that the United States recognize the "independence" of Manchoukuo and secure the consent of Chiang Kai-shek and Britain to the creation of a Japanese protectorate in North China.

On the surface these may seem fairly good terms for China. Actually they are almost precisely the demands which led China to take up arms against Japan in 1937. In view of the favorable turn of events in recent weeks, Chiang could hardly be prevailed upon to accept such an arrangement unless the United States followed the shameful example of England and France at the time of Munich and brought irresistible pressure to bear on him. It is difficult to believe that the State Department appeasers would dare go to such lengths.

There is a serious possibility, however, that the Administration will agree with Konoye on a more limited settlement which will give Japan everything it really wants.

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Konoye might consent, for example, to make a token withdrawal from Indo-China and certain sections of China in return for a limited restoration of trade with the United States. This would give Japan a much-desired respite in which to prepare for a resumption of its program of aggression and the materials which it needs badly for its war with China.

Many observers believe that a collapse of negotiations with the United States would be followed by serious domestic disturbances within Japan. This is one of the arguments of the State Department appeasers in support of a settlement. It is true that failure by Konoye might lead to the emergence of a new super-nationalistic regime that would rush headlong into war on the side of the Axis. But it also must be kept in kind that Japan is weaker today than at any time in the past, and is much more manageable, from a military standpoint, than it would be if we were once more shipping it oil and other essential war materials. Moreover, any domestic upheavals that may occur in Japan will only weaken the country further and reduce its nuisance value. Now is the time to stand firm if we wish to make an aggressor pay the price for his crimes.

The Attack on Henderson

IT IS hard to overestimate the importance of the fight opened by Martin Dies against Leon Henderson. It is the Texan's first attempt at a comeback since his own state defeated his efforts to obtain a seat in the United States Senate. Dies is an unpopular man in Congress, and his humiliating setback in the election gratified the cloakrooms immensely. It was hoped that this would bring the demagogue down a peg. He has been moving cautiously since then, on the lookout for a new foothold.

That Dies had decided to "get" Henderson has been common gossip in Washington for some time. The Texan hopes by this fight to mobilize behind him not only anti-red sentiment but the opposition of powerful industrial and agricultural interests to price control. The strategy is to shift public attention from the desperate need for new price-control legislation to the question of Henderson's political coloration and that of his aides.

Every month of delay in price control is money in the till for those who hope to profit by the growing shortage of raw materials and the curtailed production of civilian goods. The rise of prices, despite headlines about "crackdowns" on this group of producers and that, is frighteningly similar to that in the last war.

Axis fifth-column strategy, so often served consciously or unconsciously by Dies, could have no better objective than an uncontrolled price rise in this country. Rising prices mean not only lowered morale but an increase in the number of strikes, a sharpening of suspicion and hostility between worker and employer interests. The Mediation Commission has done an excellent job so far in holding down the number of strikes, and it has won wide confidence in industry. It could hardly hope to maintain its record during a mounting spiral of prices and production costs.

It is significant that the spokesmen of finance and big business who talked so much of the dangers of inflation in the years after 1933 have so little to say now when runaway prices are in the offing. They do talk of cutting "non-defense expenditures," by which they mean social services and aid to the unemployed, but they scarcely mention the need for price control. The "dangers of inflation" are one thing when the government is spending money to end bread lines and rescue farmers from bankruptcy. Spending then cuts the power of the haves to buy the labor and the property of the have-nots. The "dangers of inflation" are something esle again when huge profits may be made from shortages and skyrocketing prices.

When Mr. Roosevelt sought by spending and by manipulation of the gold content of the dollar to stop deflation and restore the balance between debtor and creditor, the most lurid stories of past monetary hysterias were invoked in the campaign against him. These facts are forgotten and discussion of inflationary possibilities is curiously hushed when control measures threaten to interfere with profits.

Not since his earlier attempts to smear the New Deal has Dies been granted so favorable an opportunity as now to serve powerful interests and obtain their support for his own future advancement. His intention is to make Henderson's position as Price Administrator and as member of SPAB, top defense agency, untenable. Dies is setting out to make himself one of the most powerful men in Washington.

If Henderson's participation in the campaign to aid the Spanish Loyalists can be used to embarrass the Administration to the point where his usefulness is destroyed, many of the top New Dealers are unsafe, and not the New Dealers alone. While Henderson helped the Spanish refugee relief campaign, Stimson helped the campaign to lift the embargo on war supplies for Spain.

The Henderson employees of whom Dies complains have already run the gauntlet of the FBI and the Civil Service Commission and obviously have been found, whatever their sympathies in the past, to be eligible for government jobs under the legislation which bars Communists from office. These agencies use methods and apply standards that tend rather to the crude than the subtle; in fact, they go far beyond affiliation with the Communist Party in their probing. Reading *The Nation* and *PM* has been enough in the past to bring government employees under suspicion. If they must also be subjected to the strain of a war of nerves waged by Dies, the government service will be further demoralized.

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British Labor Demands Action

BY LOUIS FISCHER

London, September 7, by Cable

A YEAR ago today 350 airplanes flew up the Thames estuary, broke through the protective R. A. F. screen, and rained death and ruin on London. One hundred and three German raiders were brought down, but the grim struggle for the air of England continued for many weeks, until October 31, when the Luftwaffe retired exhausted. This morning and afternoon I have been celebrating the first anniversary of that epochal battle for Britain by sitting in a deck chair in our big garden, reading the Sunday papers in the warm sunshine. Giant chrysanthemums, dazzling dahlias and marigolds, and pink cosmos bloom on the borders of the broad lawn. When I started the financial page of the *Observer,* medium bombers were flying above me, going east. When I had finished lunch and the four papers, the same machines were roaring homeward to their airdromes. They had been on a visit to the Nazi-held Continent, but the Luftwaffe was absent today as it has been absent from London these many weeks. What remains of it is in Russia.

Private information reaching me tells of air-raid damage in the old, familiar Moscow haunts. R. A. F. machines and pilots are helping to defend Leningrad; they are thus defending London. But Leningrad is so nearly encircled on the land side that it cannot send its munitions to the rest of the country, and Leningrad produces at least 15 per cent of the Soviet Union's manufactured output. Add to this the factories in the Nazi-occupied Soviet provinces, plus those robbed of current when the Dnieper dam was blown up, and the total is an impressive diminution of the Soviets' capacity to replenish stocks of war materials. An "authoritative" source here announces that Russia's ability to replace munitions consumed in battle was about half as great as Germany's when the war began. It is less now. In the Russian winter industrial output normally lags, yet new reserves could be accumulated if the battle raged less fiercely. However, I imagine the winter won't bring a complete lull. The Nazi attackers will be greatly inconvenienced by the cold and snowdrifts, but they will enjoy an advantage as the rivers freeze hard and disappear as natural obstacles. Every lake then becomes an airdrome. There is no mud, no marshes. In March, 1921, the Red Army crossed the ice of the Gulf of Finland and captured the island fortress of Kronstadt in the face of shells fired into the ice by the rebels.

Unless the Reichswehr is more spent than most experts think, it won't give the Russians a winter respite. Therefore the problem of foreign supplies is supremely urgent for Moscow. The Kremlin is insisting on the early convocation of the Anglo-American-Russian conference and is impatient at the slowness of deliveries.

At the Trades Union Congress last week Jack Tanner, president of the Engineers' Union, affirmed that Moore-Brabazon, Minister of Aircraft Production, had stated in his presence that he was glad Russia and Germany were destroying each other so that England could become supreme. Moore-Brabazon's denial has not closed the matter, and this incident, as well as the entire subject of aid to Russia, will dominate the eagerly awaited reopening of Parliament. But even Moore-Brabazon would favor sending supplies to Russia, since otherwise the Soviets might not be able to destroy Germany. The British government is resolutely determined to grant maximum assistance to Russia. Lord Beaverbrook is also anxious to divert lease-lend munitions to the Russo-German front, for what Britain itself can do is very limited.

The central problem of this country, as I see it after six weeks' study, is like that of two people in bed trying to get warm under a narrow blanket. When one is covered, the other gets uncovered. Britain's resources in man-power and industrial plants are inadequate to wage this war. When skilled men are exempted from military service in order to maintain the output of factories and mines, the generals complain that they must have trained mechanics for a modern motorized army, but when experienced factory workers are mobilized for the army, employers and trade unions warn of the fall in production which must result. The Russian situation aggravates this dilemma. Some say, "Let's manufacture more arms and send them to Russia." Others say, "Let's quickly train a big mechanized force to invade the Continent and relieve the pressure on Russia." But what's the good of a force without sufficient arms? It is generally conceded that Britain has not now and is not likely soon to have either the trained soldiers or the equipment necessary for an invasion of Western Europe. For the moment Britain is turning out more tanks, planes, and guns than America, but it isn't enough.

This problem cast a shadow over the annual Trades Union Congress in Edinburgh last week. The congress was alive and militant. The trade-union movement is the backbone and banker of the Labor Party. Its vigorous stand and protests have gained it many members since the war, whereas the Labor Party, being in the govern-

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ment and further removed from the daily troubles of the workers, has been meekly acquiescent and has lost members. No one, for the moment, thinks that Labor should leave the government or should not have joined it, but the independence of the Trades Union Congress is a tremendous asset which the trade unions intend to exploit. The delegates came away from the proceedings with the impression that even the general secretary, Sir Walter Citrine, had moved leftward.

The chief grievances of the Trades Union Congress were not personal or professional, like wages or pensions, but national. It was primarily concerned over the paucity of aid to Russia and the necessity of getting on with the war by stepping up production. The rank and file of the workers advocated workers' participation in management. The *Daily Herald* supported this trend editorially. The congress adopted a unanimous resolution asking the government to "associate the trade unions concerned with the administration and management of all vital war industries." Numerous speakers tried to convince the government that foremen and workingmen often understood the causes of bottlenecks better than managing directors. Jealous of its prerogatives, the congress criticized Home Secretary Herbert Morrison's new compulsory fire-fighting scheme mainly because he had failed to consult the congress before promulgating it. He apologized. This was intended as warning to other Cabinet ministers who might overlook the trade unions.

The congress also won the first skirmish with Churchill. Last year Chamberlain refused to listen to its appeal to amend the 1927 Trades Disputes Act. It finds especially irksome two clauses which enjoin the trade unions composed of civil servants from entering the congress and prohibit local communities and boroughs from maintaining a closed shop in their communal enterprises. Churchill has consented to allow the T. U. C. to negotiate with the Tory party, and if they reach an agreement, legislation will be introduced into Parliament. The fact that the congress is meeting representatives of the Conservative Party is illuminating. Normally the Labor Party would conduct the conversations in behalf of the trade unions, but the T. U. C. believed that the Labor Party, as a section of the coalition government, could exercise less leverage and pressure.

The annual assembly in Edinburgh likewise took a strong stand against the government's announced policy of stabilizing wages at their present level. Ernest Bevin said in a recent speech at Llandudno that since the government is determined to stabilize prices it is also entitled to stabilize wages. The Trades Union Congress, as one journalist noted, gave this idea the "raspberry." Sir Walter Citrine, who has no irrepressible love for Bevin, led the assault by declaring that prices had risen more than wages. This technical truth becomes a fallacy if it is recalled that unemployment is practically non-existent and that many more members of families now work.

But this is another narrow blanket. The trouble is not really the relationship between wages and prices; this country simply has not enough commodities to go round. Here is the proof: Before the war the government spent 23 per cent of the national income; today it spends 60 per cent, and that almost entirely on things which the mass of people cannot eat, wear, or live in. Yet the population is earning much more money because everybody is working and salaries are up. Since prices are controlled, it becomes still more difficult for people to spend their money. That is the great national problem—too much money and too little to spend it on. The government is trying to solve the difficulty by increasing taxes, stimulating savings and the purchase of government bonds, and proposing stable wages, but the trade unions won't have this last. Instead, they demand suppression of black-market speculation and of inequalities in the distribution of commodities, and extension of the rationing system to include more foods. One delegate, the slim Anne Loughlin, told the congress, "If something isn't done quickly, there'll be a bloody revolution in this country and women will lead it." Her main objections were that women must stand in queues after working long hours and that the middlemen's profits are high.

I discussed many aspects of the food situation the day before yesterday with Major Gwilym Lloyd George, Assistant Minister of Food. He made me aware of the simple principle that you cannot ration an article of food until you have enough of it for all. For instance, if you rationed caviar, each person would get a fraction of one egg. He told me that under the Lease-Lend Act cheese is arriving from America. Cheese is now rationed at three ounces per person, eight ounces for miners and agricultural workers. The supply of fish, he said, is down to 25 per cent of the pre-war figure, and the supply of meat is likewise lower, owing to a shortage of refrigerator ships. He added, "Fewer people are short of food than before the war because more workers are employed. The middle class is eating less, but scientists declare that all get sufficient calories, although variety is lacking. The diet is not poorer in nutriment, but we cannot afford to let it drop farther." He revealed to me that new commodities will soon be rationed. He was most concerned with the supply of milk for children; the country is consuming more milk than before the war because of the deficiency of other foods and also because the government has introduced a system of distributing milk to children, invalids, bombed-out families, expectant mothers, and so forth. He said the milk supply would break down unless additional condensed and powdered milk were received from America.

Britain also needs concentrated fruit juices and vitamins and canned meat if the people are to have the energy to work during the day and stand fire watch

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during the night, all under terrific nervous strain. When I think how America wallows in luxury while this country ekes out its short rations I cannot have much respect for Christian civilization. As in Russia during certain years food is the favorite topic of conversation here. The less food there is, the more talk about it. I heard a story yesterday about Vivien Leigh, the famous movie star. Her friends in America wrote asking whether she needed any food. Since censorship deletes all requests for food, she replied, "No, but send us a bad actor."

Memo on Japan

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, September 7

MEMO to the Home Office: I cannot confirm the story you heard that Jesse Jones might give the Japanese a loan if they agreed to behave more politely in the Far East. In one high quarter I was told that the Japanese did not need foreign exchange and in another that they did. I incline to the latter view. Whether the story is true or not, two days of visiting in the State Department have convinced me that the trend toward appeasement is stronger than ever.

In the lower ranks of the department there are wry faces, but higher up the thinking on the Far Eastern situation is still done in 1931 terms. We mustn't play into the hands of the extremists in Japan. We must help to strengthen the moderates. If we press too hard, there may be an explosion. This seems to be the prevalent frame of mind at the White House as well as the State Department.

One well-informed observer who has watched the Far East for many years believes the Japanese have gone as far as they care to at the moment. He thinks that they will mark time until the outcome of the Russo-German war is clearer, and that the Nazis cannot make Tokyo move earlier. The next best thing to a further Japanese advance is to fool the American government into giving Japan some more oil and war supplies.

Berlin is an old hand at these tactics. It let Mussolini play the come-on game with the British for six months after the war began while London supplied Italy with oil, scrap, and funds in the hope of weaning it from the Axis. Our State Department has been played for a sucker in the same way by Vichy and Franco and is ready to repeat hopefully with Tokyo.

I suppose I had better mention no names, but a certain local paper which is anti-interventionist and runs the editorial column of a certain famous chain publisher and the dispatches of his best-known foreign correspondent published recently an interesting dispatch from this correspondent in the Far East. He wrote that the Germans were much worried lest America succeed in inducing Japan to leave the Axis. This correspondent's dispatches have never been of a kind to make him *persona non grata* in Berlin. He seems to have friendly contacts with high government circles in both Japan and Germany. It may be that these friends will be furious with him for "letting the cat out of the bag," or it may be that the Germans would like us to believe that Japan may leave the Axis. I think the dispatch was a coy glance and a dropped handkerchief. It should be possible to learn a little from what has happened in the Far East since 1931. The first thing to learn is that the Japanese always move in the direction where they think resistance is weak, and the best indication to them of weakness is an attempt to appease them. The Russians preferred to have them go south; the British and Americans preferred—if anything—to have them move north. They should have moved north in gratitude, for Britain connived in the Manchurian seizure and America supplied the materials for the war on China. These concessions, contrasted with the unofficial but bloody defeats administered to the Japanese on the Soviet-Manchurian border, convinced them it would be safer to go south.

To say that we must either give Japan supplies or fight it, is to beg the question. Japan's failure to interfere with the oil shipments to Vladivostok shows that its bluff can be called. We have the blandest of reasons for denying it supplies—we need them at home; and a joint British-Dutch-American embargo would deprive Tokyo of the means of fighting. Worthless promises are all we could get in return for those supplies anyway, and the bitter disillusionment of the Chinese people. For Japan will not evacuate China, and any deal would sell out China for the sake of British-Dutch-American imperialism.

I do not think a deal of this kind is politically possible. The situation is too explosive. This is Japan's opportunity for empire, and sooner or later it will move again and there will be war in the East. What disturbs one is the kind of thinking still going on at the top of the State Department and in the White House. How much faith can the common people of the world have in our four freedoms and our eight points, how much confidence can they place in our ability to build a better world after Hitler is defeated, if we go on playing this kind of blundering, old-style politics in the Far East?

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War's Fourth Dimension

BY GABRIEL JAVSICAS

THE conveyor belt in industry introduced into modern warfare a new element as revolutionary in its import as the invention of the steam engine, which brought about the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century. As the airplane added a third dimension to war, the conveyor belt introduced the fourth—the time element. In the war of 1914-18 time already played an important role; with the development of mass-production methods it has become today the decisive factor. It deprives war of all spontaneity. No longer can a nation rise as one man and smite the enemy. The conveyor belt has made war a long-premeditated enterprise, chained to time.

In 1914 war fervor could be stirred up in a few weeks and an army mobilized in a few days. Equipment for the armies was on hand or could be produced in sufficient quantities by established war industries. Peace industries could quickly switch over to war production. Even so, the very complete preparations of Germany would have defeated France but for the breathing spell gained for French war industries by the victory of the Marne.

In the machine production brought in by the Industrial Revolution a finished article is produced not directly, by a craftsman or a number of workers, but indirectly, through the intermediate process of constructing a power-driven tool or machine. This method lengthens the time needed for the manufacture of one article, but materially reduces the time needed for manufacturing it in quantity. The conveyor belt developed during the long armistice since 1918, while it speeded up mass production, increased the time required for the construction of the first finished implement of war from months to years, and thereby made modern war a matter of long and careful premeditation. Thus it placed almost all the trump cards in the hands of the determined aggressor. *Blitzkrieg* is a misleading word. The surprise attack may look like lightning out of the blue, but actually it is the result of years of intensive preparation.

Terrible as is the destruction inflicted by the weight of the aggressor's accumulated material, the havoc wrought upon the time at the disposal of the defense is even more fatal. Only as the enemy attacks does he reveal the nature of the weapons which he has developed in years of secret preparation. It is then too late for the defense to produce the weapons with which it might resist these new offensive methods. With rare exceptions, such as the degaussing cable invented to combat the magnetic mine, effective defensive weapons can be produced in quantity only on the assembly line. The invention and mass production of weapons that can stop the dive-bomber or pierce the heavy armor of a tank require months or even years in time of peace; in time of war the decisive battle may be lost, as the Battle of France was lost, before the blueprint can be put upon paper. Hence under the conditions created by the time element, the offensive is not only the best defense but virtually the only possible defense.

Before 1914 arms and ammunition could be accumulated leisurely over a period of years on a yearly war budget; they did not have to be used in offensive warfare in order not to be wasted. New types of arms were invented, but the new machinery required could be built under peace-time conditions while business continued as usual. Arms and ammunition used in the Boer war and earlier were still serviceable in 1914. Since it now takes from three to five years of intensive work and planning to make modern implements of war come off the assembly lines in appreciable quantities, the aggressor must plan the moment of his attacks years ahead. The Nazi war machine knew the approximate day on which its tanks, planes, and guns would come off the belt in sufficient quantities to conquer Europe. The non-aggressive nations could have no such foreknowledge. It is true that German rearmament was no secret, and theoretically France and Great Britain were in a position to counter the German armament program by one of their own, but practically the difficulties, both material and psychological, proved insurmountable.

General Mitchell in the United States and General Charles de Gaulle in France saw the importance of planes and tanks, and De Gaulle worked out the idea of mechanized warfare later adopted by the Germans. But neither of them were industrial experts. If they realized the task which the adoption of these instruments of warfare would impose upon industry, they considered it beyond the scope of their competence and did not occupy themselves with it. Inasmuch as their suggestions were rejected by the army bureaucracy and as the anti-militarist world in which they lived failed to support them, the problem of gearing industry to the quantity production of planes and tanks did not come up for consideration.

The French government had a dim realization of the difficulty, and after the remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1936, the inadequacy of plane production was debated in the French Parliament. On the ground that plane

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models grow obsolete in a very short time, it was decided that France should not go in for mass production of war planes until war became imminent. The complications that were bound to arise when it became necessary to freeze the models and start mass production were not taken into account. No one, apparently, had any conception of the time that would be required to conquer these difficulties. In this respect the course of action of France and even Great Britain was as little related to practical experience as the speculations of the ancient Greeks were to the experimental method of modern science.

Germany, however, having accepted the principles of modern warfare developed by De Gaulle in 1934 in his book "Vers l'armée de métier," acted upon them. It took Germany about six years to build a modern army. It may be assumed that it could have accomplished this in half the time if some other country had done the pioneering. Once Germany had passed the experimental stage and had built the necessary new factories, its intended victims could describe their own defensive efforts only as "too little and too late." When Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland, German industry was well advanced in the mass production of planes and tanks, while France was totally unprepared in spite of its large standing army.

From then on the trump card, adequate industrial preparation for war, remained in the hand of Hitler. It conferred such tremendous advantages upon the Nazis that all their apparently reckless words and actions now look in retrospect like models of moderation and caution. Conversely, Britain's traditional policy of maintaining a balance of power on the Continent and its cautious wait-and-see attitude now appear as the height of foolhardiness. Englishmen still thought France was wielding the big stick in Europe, while in reality Germany had seized that weapon. They failed to perceive that the time factor was shifting the balance in favor of Germany.

The purely technical difficulties imposed by the time factor upon the nations dedicated to defense were enhanced by psychological complications. A nation could not make the effort for total defense while its government was straining every resource to appease the enemy. As long as they hoped that war might be avoided, the people of France and England could not be expected to renounce all social progress in order to prepare for war. It is not easy to grapple with a hypothetical danger several years ahead of time. The more peaceful a people is, the less likely it is to attribute bellicose intentions to another people. And our energies fail where our imagination does not reach. Two million men in Great Britain took a solemn oath that under no conceivable circumstances would they go to war. In such an atmosphere Liddell Hart's theory of the superiority of defense over offense fell on willing ears.

As British statesmen indulged in the luxury of spending their week-ends away from their desks, and as French democracy habitually reshuffled the Cabinet every six months or so, Hitler seemed to choose these moments for action, and the legend grew that he had an unfailing sense of timing. But country week-ends and fallen Cabinets were only superficially the cause of democratic inaction. Actually any day was propitious for any of Hitler's undertakings, since he was always several years ahead in his preparations for war. France and England had missed the bus in 1933.

Nevertheless, modern industry contains one element which, properly used, can defeat the aggressor in the long run. Capitalism differs from any system of economy which preceded it in being revolutionary in tendency, whereas the others were static. The same horse-drawn cart served the Roman economy and medieval feudalism. In an industrial economy, however, machines and the products of machinery grow obsolete in shorter and shorter periods of time. Each year industry must retool for the mass production of ever improved motor cars. Because Great Britain froze its war-plane models later than Germany, it gained an edge in quality which enabled it to defend the British Isles successfully against invasion. Now the United States is starting the mass production of flying fortresses superior to the long-range bombers of Germany, and already Germany has been forced to reduce its output of planes in order to retool for newer types. Moreover, while Germany had the initial advantage of being able to coordinate the mass production of all implements of war for the chosen day of attack, it was also compelled to go to war as soon as it was ready. To delay would have made all its preparations useless by rendering its weapons obsolete. No nation can afford to perform this work of total war preparation more than once in a generation.

Drawing upon the experience of the British and German war industries, a determined United States can turn the tables on Nazi Germany. The comparative value of the various implements of war in actual battle is no longer a secret. The struggle for Crete and the sinking of the Bismarck have solved the problem of sea power versus air power in favor of coordination, as the question of land power versus air power was settled by the Battle of France likewise in favor of coordination. It is now imperative that the time required for the production of each implement of war be tabulated, and that a coordinating body of all the armed services and of industrial experts work out a schedule which will make all the needed equipment ready at the same time. If battleships cannot be completed as quickly as the rest of the program, it might be wiser to build destroyers, speedboats, and flying fortresses.

At the same time an expeditionary force must be prepared. And it must be ready when its equipment begins to roll off the assembly lines. In the preparation of this

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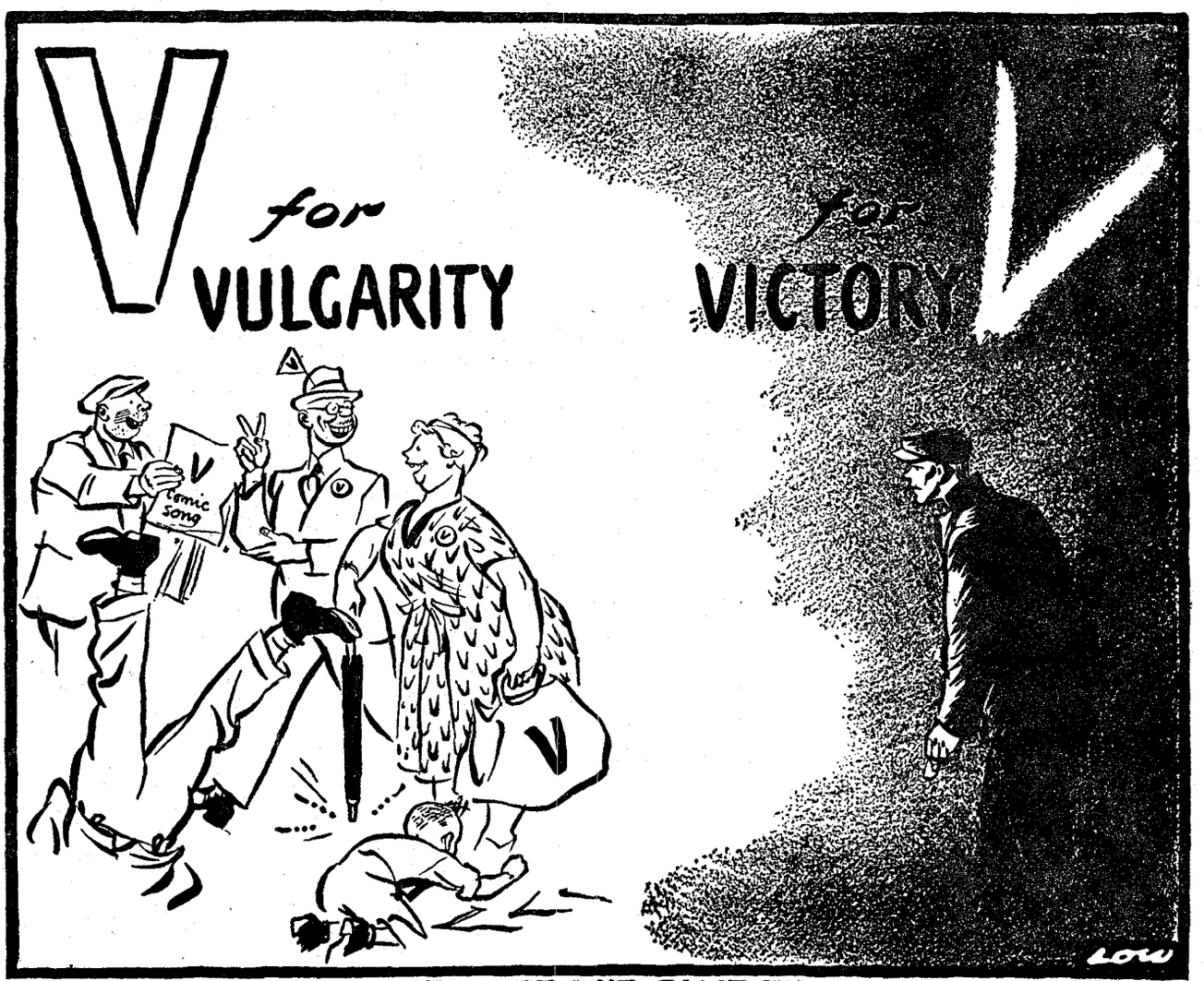
force the important point again is not its size but its striking power. The thin end of the wedge must be exceedingly sharp.

Germany was compelled to go to war as soon as its armament program was completed, but the United States is under no such compulsion as long as Great Britain continues to fight. American planes, tanks, and ships will not accumulate and rust or become obsolete for want of immediate employment while these tools of victory can be shipped to Great Britain. Should Britain go down, however, the compulsion of the time element to go to war without waiting for the attack of the enemy would become operative here. Germany, having conquered Europe, can put more than a hundred million people to work on a new armament program of its own. Hitler did not boast when he said that the German armies would have better equipment next year than they now have. While Germany alone cannot match the industrial resources of the United States, the entire European continent plus a conquered Russia might. It is true that the millions of subjugated workers in Europe are unwilling workers, but they can only slow down the fulfilment of the Nazi program. They cannot revolt. The days of the barricades are gone forever. No other factor demands all-out aid to Britain and Russia so compellingly as the time element, for if they fall, the United States will either have to fight Germany at once or, like France and Russia, fight it with weapons made obsolete by the accelerating progress of industry and invention.

Although Russia had prepared for total war for fifteen years, the time element has not been without importance in the Battle of Russia. Stalin left to Hitler the advantage of fixing the moment of attack; consequently Soviet Russia, like France, could not freeze the models for its tanks and planes at the right moment. If the democracies have suffered from "too little and too late," Soviet Russia, in a way, is suffering from "too much and too soon." Its equipment was ready for an attack which did not come until much of it had become obsolete.

The fourth dimension in modern war, the time element, has created for the democracies the problem which France failed to solve: to designate the enemy and to seize the offensive without waiting for an act of aggression. Whether England holds out or goes down, American industry is working against time. No task is more difficult for a peaceful nation than to resolve to fight



NOT QUITE THE SAME THING

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before it has been attacked. Of that the Nazis are well aware. The Roosevelt Administration is equally clear on this point. It remains to be seen whether the people of America will develop that spirit of solidarity with the conquered nations, and with Britain, which alone can justify to their own conscience a well-timed declaration of war. As long as Britain and Russia hold their lines, America has time to prepare. Upon the use it makes of this opportunity will depend the outcome of the last battle in this world war.

Land for Puerto Ricans

BY CARL HARTMAN

REXFORD GUY TUGWELL becomes governor of Puerto Rico, after an absence of more than three years from the front ranks of the federal service, charged with the conduct of an experiment in land-tenure reform which indicates that the New Deal has kept sight of that long-range social and economic objective, despite the engrossing importance of the armament program. Tugwell told the Senate Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs that he did not intend to give Puerto Rico a system of communal landholding similar to that of Russia or Mexico, or to do anything to decrease the island's productivity. However, last spring the insular legislature passed a law providing that all corporate landholdings larger than 500 acres should be converted either into big units leased by individuals from a public agency and distributing at least 85 per cent of their profits to farm laborers, or into family-size plots, on which small-scale operation would inevitably decrease the volume of the intensively cultivated sugar crop—if this had not already been limited by AAA quotas. This law was drafted with the advice of Tugwell, who as adviser to Secretary Ickes on land-use problems in Puerto Rico made a study of the subject. Probably Tugwell will try to distribute the land according to the provisions of the law; and he has said that if the experiment is successful he will advocate its extension to the factory farms of the Middle and Far West and to Hawaii.

The roots of the redistribution policy go back to a joint resolution passed by Congress in 1900, forbidding any corporation to own or control more than 500 acres of Puerto Rican land. This was made part of the Organic Act of 1917 and confirmed by the insular corporation law. No determined attempt was made to enforce it, however, until 1935, when the legislature, on Washington's inspiration, acted to provide quicker procedure for punishing offending corporations, and the New Deal appointed a new insular attorney general whose chief interest was the land problem.

It was not until March of last year that eight members of the United States Supreme Court—Justice McReynolds did not participate—validated this new legislation, and the federal courts are still listening to a dispute over the appointment of the first receiver. Not one of the 400,000 acres said to be illegally held has yet been sold. The island's Justice Department has filed several other cases, but their progress has been slow for numerous reasons, including the fear that throwing many large tracts of land on the market at one time would be disastrous to the island's economy—that is, ruin the sugar corporations. Another difficulty is that variations in the legal structure of the different companies make necessary innumerable subsidiary rulings.

Last November's territorial elections brought into power the *Partido Popular Democrático,* pledged to the slogan *Pan, Tierra, y Libertad* (Bread, Land, and Liberty). This party had disdained to join the violent but academic debate on statehood versus independence which has screened political job-grabbing in Puerto Rico for forty years. It fought an anti-corporation campaign, warning the country people that they were making a poor bargain if they continued their traditional practice of selling their votes to the candidates representing the big landowners. At its first session last spring the *Populares'* legislature enacted a broad social program, on which the carefully drawn land law occupied the foremost position. The program was approved almost in its entirety by a thoroughgoing New Deal governor, Guy J. Swope, now director of the Interior Department's Bureau of Territories and Island Possessions.

The new law sets up an eight-man Land Authority, on which the commissioners of agriculture and commerce, of the interior, and of labor will serve. Tugwell will appoint the other five, with the advice and consent of the insular senate. The Land Authority will have power to acquire land by expropriation and resell it to landless farmers in 10-to-100-acre plots, to be paid for in forty years, and to create what are called "proportional-profit farms" of 100 to 500 acres or even larger, to be operated by individual lessees for from 5 to 15 per cent of the net profit—the rest of the profit to be distributed among the laboring families established on the property, proportionately to their earned wages. To finance the plan, the legislature appropriated $2,000,000 from the insular treasury, authorized the issuance of $5,000,000

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worth of insular bonds, and authorized the Land Authority itself to issue bonds up to 75 per cent of the value of the land it acquires.

It is expected that some federal agency, probably the Farm Security Administration, will lend the farmers money to buy the land. This money will then be available to the Land Authority for further purchases, which will in turn enable it to issue more bonds. The estimated value of land held in large units in Puerto Rico varies from $30,000,000 to $150,000,000.

While the land law was before the legislature, Tugwell thought he had persuaded *Popular* leaders to prohibit the holding of more than 500 acres of land by individuals, as this had long been prohibited for corporations and as the legislature was planning to prohibit it for trusts and partnerships. About 100,000 acres are held in such large tracts by individuals—almost all of them Puerto Ricans and some of them contributors to the campaign fund of the *Populares,* through whom they may have expected an opportunity to pick up choice corporation land at bargain rates. A week after Tugwell left the island, the legislature passed the law—with all references to individual holdings carefully excised.

Whether Tugwell can obtain the change he wants, or whether he will carry out his threat to "boycott" the Land Authority, may not be settled until the legislature meets again in February, unless the Governor calls it into special session earlier. At the moment Tugwell appears reconciled with Luis Muñoz Marin, president of the Senate and leader of the *Populares.* In any case, the FSA will probably reorganize its Puerto Rico office in order to attack the problem with larger funds.

The problem is this: Puerto Rico was overpopulated when the United States moved in forty-three years ago. Since then the population has almost doubled, until the island is now one of the most thickly settled areas on the globe, with about 1,900,000 inhabitants living more than 540 to the square mile and with less than an acre of tillable soil to each inhabitant. The average cash income per farm family is about $135 a year. Despite a government-sponsored contraceptive program, the birth rate shows no appreciable decline, while public-health measures are constantly reducing the death rate. Industry is feeble, with little prospect of expansion, and the acuteness of the economic situation is concealed rather than alleviated by federal expenditures on relief and defense projects.

The sugar-mill corporations, whose stock is held largely in continental United States, have continued to acquire land until—according to the latest (1936) available figures of the AAA—fewer than twenty control more than half the land in farms. Four firms have almost half of that. Between 1920 and 1930 the area of all rural property managed by owners decreased by more than 300,000 acres, and the area managed by non-owners increased correspondingly. The small sugar grower, traditionally financed by the mill, was either losing his land for debt or leasing it to the mill owners, with whose mass-production agricultural methods he could not compete. The smallest farmers became share-croppers.

It will be impossible to alter the basic position of sugar in Puerto Rico's economy for many years. Although state agencies and independent agronomists encourage experiments, the island cannot grow nearly enough food for itself; at the same time the sugar market guaranteed by the tariff and the AAA-subsidized quotas exerts an irresistible pressure on the farmer. All that can be done now is to divert into the island's economy the $3,000,000 exported every year in dividends. Obviously, this sum would spread thin among a rural population of about 1,300,000.

If the federal government cooperates, the plan will probably be for the Land Authority, perhaps with RFC assistance, to purchase as much land as possible. It is said that the corporations are now eager only to drive as good a bargain as they can for their land. Despite their past insistence that mill operations are unprofitable unless the same interests control great tracts of land, they apparently can be persuaded to continue simply as processors. Tugwell has said that "valuation of properties to be acquired ought to be determined without regard to governmental benefits." This is probably an initial bargaining position, since without the AAA and tariff subsidies Puerto Rico would be too high-cost a production area to make cane growing a good business proposition—especially in view of the comparatively high minimum wage for field workers ($1.20 a day) enforced by the Department of Agriculture as one of the conditions on which its subsidy is paid.

The FSA, as is its practice, would lend farm families the entire amount they need to buy land and set themselves up on it with house, tools, and seed. Although the older farm-credit agencies think that the farmer should put up at least 10 per cent of the loan himself so that he will "feel he has a stake in the property," it would be difficult to find many landless farmers able to do this in Puerto Rico. The FSA claims a high repayment record during its seven years' existence.

The plan must, of course, be regarded as an experiment, conducted in a quiet backyard from which the sugar lobby's cries of communism will echo only faintly in our reactionary press, occupied as it is with more sensational matters. The New Deal deserves only partial credit for the undertaking. The electoral victory of the *Populares,* without which nothing like the land law could have been passed, was not helped, or expected, by Washington. However, it is to the Administration's credit that an agricultural economist of Tugwell's undoubted ability and prestige in liberal circles was charged with taking advantage of the opportunity.

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Le Dossier Laval

BY HAL LEHRMAN

HENRY TORRES escaped aboard a British ship to North Africa before his friend, Pierre Laval, could jail him. Between the desert and the sea the great French lawyer waited for his government to follow. But when Laval won the Battle of Bordeaux and the first fatal skirmishes at Vichy, Torrès understood the finality of the treason. He voyaged on to Rio de Janeiro and then to New York. Last month the man who gained acquittal for Schwartzbard, assassin of the Ukrainian dictator Petlura, and for Germaine Berton, murderess of the Royalist gang leader Marius Plateau, published a new brief, "La France trahie—Pierre Laval," * a book not yet available in English. A few days later a Free French youth shot Laval down.

Pierre Laval

Torrès will never be allowed to plead for Paul Collette. The Nazis refused to let him head the defense in the case of the Reichstag fire. They can hardly be expected now to welcome the attorney engaged by world liberals for Herschel Grynszpan. It doesn't matter. The biography in acid French which Torrès has written does with its indictment what Collette did with his bullets.

Laval, twenty-six, had just opened an office as a proletarian lawyer in the Faubourg Saint-Martin—a district enveloped "in the comforting aroma of a symphony of cheese"—when Torrès, eighteen, made his acquaintance. They collaborated on some cases, were opponents in others. Torrès watched Laval win twelve Cabinet posts and the Premiership three times; acquire newspapers, radio stations, a castle, a spa which gushed polluted water; use his political power to make himself one of the richest men in France. In Parliament, Torrès, as vice-chairman of the Chamber's Foreign Affairs Committee, fought the Laval policy of flirtation with Germany, alienation of Russia, surrender in Ethiopia, and sabotage of collective security. In three major scandals—those centering in Hanau, Oustric, and Stavisky—Laval skirted the shadow of the penitentiary, confiding to *son vieux Torrès* his basic credo: "Virtue doesn't pay, and sacrifice never issues dividends."

Torrès shows the man behind the blunders and the ultimate treachery, unveiling dim first causes. Laval was ignorant. Philosophy and literature were useful only for supplying quips to amuse lobbies and constituents. His knowledge of history consisted of a few dates and mnemonic rhymes remembered from the *lycée*. In the Quai d'Orsay he set up a diplomatic "night school" where foreign correspondents filled him, by command, with "episodes of Montreux, anecdotes of Lausanne, epigrams of Geneva, gossip of Locarno." This was his only discipline for the solution of world problems. Bored by diplomatic papers, he chose to conduct great international affairs like little business ones—by direct contact, private horse-trading. Discredited and overthrown, he blamed not himself but "the English, the Jews, the leftist parties, the people, the nation." He grew convinced he was being persecuted by the democracy which had elevated him from his father's beer-slopped cafe to greatness. In the end he reached the tragic conclusion that "all wars are civil," that dictatorship alone would avenge his fall.

France was only the last of his victims. He had already betrayed his origins, his party, his friends. For this he was superbly equipped. Torrès describes his baggage thus at the outset of his journey to disaster:

> He was armed with an instinct sure and subtle. Sometimes by intuition, sometimes by calculation, he always took the exact measure of men. He was convincing without being eloquent, moving without being moved, disdainful of friendship, its sacrifices and rewards, but skilled in camaraderie as a science.

From boyhood "a rebel against hydrotherapy and the toothbrush," Laval cultivated slovenliness as a political advertisement. Even his white tie, symbol of bourgeois evening splendor, was a reassurance to labor when worn by daylight in revolt against conformity. He began as a socialist teetering on anarchism. "Capitalism is disorder!" his first campaign posters screamed. In 1914 he hid behind his parliamentary privilege to escape the trenches. He was on Malvy's *Carnet B* of dangerous radicals—fomentor of mutiny, intimate of Trotsky, tracker of *Poincaré-la-Guerre*.

When the Clemenceau-Mandel clean-up of defeatism began in 1917, Laval sold out, turning informer against his ex-comrades. Some faced firing squads, others exile;

* Brentano's, $1.50. A translation will be published by the Oxford University Press in October.

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he survived to vote against the peace treaty, accomplishing a double double-cross. Defeated for reelection, he returned in 1924 as an "independent Socialist," and three years later put himself forever beyond the reach of labor by entering the Senate, a sphere unharassed by direct popular vote.

To get rid of low-fee clients he moved his office to a villa in one of the most aristocratic quarters of Paris. His law was meager, but his cunning in maneuver and manipulation was matchless. The new litigants were "war profiteers, industrialists of the invaded departments who had falsified their indemnity claims, corporation directors who had dipped into company funds, bankers who had borrowed deposits for the gaming tables." As his political power grew, the swindlers were crowded aside by international cartelists and other dignitaries who zealously paid out fortunes for the benefits of M. le Président's detached "counsel."

Last week I visited Henry Torrès and asked for his personal reaction to the attempted murder of his one-time friend. Torrès replied that as a pleader at the bar he had never condoned political crime and could not do so now. But he casually recalled a definition of czarist Russia—"despotism tempered by assassination."

Carey and the Communists

BY JAMES A. WECHSLER

Camden, September 5

THIS would seem a poor moment for any labor union to machine-gun a talented and experienced leader, but the ouster of James B. Carey from the presidency of the C. I. O.'s United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers' Union was dictated by more esoteric considerations than his labor record. Carey was relieved of his post primarily because he refused to play the part assigned to him by the Communist machine in the union. He declined to reenlist in the Popular Front as of June 22, 1941. This is the simple if sordid fact; and while a number of other items contributed to his defeat, they were incidental music to the main theme. Carey was deserted by the men with whom he had worked since the union's birth in 1936; when the party-liners decided to abandon him he found that the union's machine was in their hands. Nearly all the paid officials of the union openly or furtively abetted the opposition.

Carey's defeat, in large terms, is a measure of the internal chaos in the C. I. O. With Philip Murray ailing and harassed, with John L. Lewis's conduct now wholly unpredictable, with the Communist bloc seeking to change partners again, there is little affirmative, democratic C. I. O. leadership to combat such events as the anti-Carey drive. While caucuses flourished behind the scenes of this convention, Carey fought virtually alone—except for the disorganized support his personal popularity still commanded. The unseating of the twenty-nine-year-old union head, who is also the C. I. O.'s national secretary, was not a Lewis-engineered coup, as many reports hinted; Carey's successor was a frank aid-the-Allies candidate, and there was no sign of a Lewis cabal here. But the outcome was a plain setback to any plans Philip Murray may still have for curbing Communist power in the C. I. O. And unless Mr. Murray's health and temperament permit him to give renewed support to his own followers, the result of this convention may be only a prelude to a new Stalinist boom in the C. I. O.

The actual proceedings of this convention are by now familiar. At the outset it was clear that Carey could keep his job if he displayed a proper degree of discretion. He was urged to abandon any demand for a specific condemnation of Communist activity and, more important, for a constitutional provision empowering locals of the union to bar Communists from office. But Carey, weary of interminable somersaults by his associates and fearful of their unbridled power if he yielded now, decided to risk their wrath. After long hours of private powwows he was defeated six to five on a roll-call vote. When the execution was over, flowers were gracefully strewn on the grave to dispel any unpleasant impression; James J. Matles, director of organization and generally recognized as party-line leader in the union, delivered a eulogy of Brother Carey's past services, and even urged his reelection as secretary of the C. I. O. The comparative charity manifested by Matles's speech may confirm what many suspect—that Carey's defeat might have been averted if the convention had been delayed a few weeks and the new party position of friendship and brotherly love for all Hitler-haters given time to crystallize. But that is speculative; the fact is that Albert J. Fitzgerald, a motor-repair mechanic and union vice-president from Lynn, Massachusetts, tactfully agreed that it was harmful for the union to enact blanket criticism of Communists. His views on the subject were appreciatively greeted by the Stalinist contingent.

The tragedy of this affair is that the U. E. R. is an important and influential union, not a letterhead. It has grown under Carey's leadership to a membership of

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300,000; it holds contracts with enterprises like Westinghouse and General Electric; it is the fifth largest international union in the C. I. O. Carey rose swiftly in C. I. O. ranks as well as in his own union because, at a time when the paucity of labor leadership was acute, he possessed a valuable blend of responsibility and aggressiveness. He achieved increasing stature each year, displaying a degree of integrity which is not inevitably associated with the business of labor-leading.

In the building of the U. E. R., as in that of many young C. I. O. unions, Carey worked side by side with a substantial number of Communists and their sympathizers. This may now be retrospectively considered sinful, but it was inevitable in the absence of other assistance. Moreover, with the advent of the first ill-fated popular front Carey imitated a good many of his contemporaries: he assumed that it was possible to share the trenches with Communists without risking a bullet in his back. He gave considerable time to the American Youth Congress and lent his prestige to it. In return for his tolerance the Communists in his union displayed their familiar zeal. The union grew up, won major battles. In the process the party machine steadily appropriated key posts in the union framework, but Carey neglected to worry until the Nazi-Soviet pact was signed.

In the ensuing two years his anxiety steadily increased. His failure to build a counter-machine in that interval may be ascribed to a number of things: his reliance upon his personal influence, forgetting that thousands of new members never saw him; his excessive trust in some of his associates; the increasing pressure of general C. I. O. work, especially since Philip Murray's illness. The conflict within the union grew sharper; after some delay Carey plugged for aid to Britain and supported the reelection of Roosevelt. With such heresies he ceased to be the boy hero of what is euphemistically called the C. I. O.'s left wing. He backed the efforts of the National Defense Mediation Board and was excoriated as a Hillmanite—despite his own frequent criticism of Hillman's moves.

Then the Nazis marched east, presumably paving the way for a happy reunion between Carey and his critics. But by then he was so disturbed by the glibness of the party-line performance that he insisted upon pointing out what had happened. In Communist eyes this was not considered a jolly thing to do since we were now all for trouncing Hitler. Carey himself signed a joint officers' report hailing this newly acquired unity. But he could not drop the subject of past behavior. At the convention he was begged to forgive and forget. He didn't.

There was an independent opposition to Carey centering around the Lynn local; and the party-liners astutely exploited the feeling of some delegates that Carey's Washington duties were enough for him. There was also authentic rank-and-file bitterness over reckless Dies committee red-baiting, and this was once more used to gain immunity for Communists generally. The bulk of the delegates—and the large majority of the union membership—do not echo the current Communist manifesto; it is deplorable that the acts of their convention will give the union so much to live down in popular distrust. And it was equally painful to see Carey placed against a wall for reasons unrelated to the welfare of the union.

In the Wind

THE NEWS RESEARCH SERVICE, INC., of Los Angeles published on August 27 a bulletin alleging that the forthcoming investigation of the motion-picture industry by a subcommittee of the Interstate Commerce Committee was inspired by West Coast pro-Nazis. The central figure in the intrigue is said to be Russell Mack, a former script writer who went to Germany shortly before the war and returned an ardent pro-Nazi. Photostats of bank checks show that Mack subsidized one G. Allison Phelps, radio speaker and writer, who in several pamphlets and talks has charged that the movies are a Jewish monopoly. Just before the inquiry was announced, Phelps visited Washington and talked with Senators Reynolds and Wheeler. Two days after the investigation was approved, Phelps, in a radio broadcast, took credit for launching it.

INTIMATES of Burton K. Wheeler say that if Wendell Willkie handles the defense in the motion-picture investigation, the Montana Senator, who had planned not to take part in the proceedings, will appear to oppose Willkie.

IN ITS REPORT of the shooting of Pierre Laval and Marcel Déat, the Atlanta, Georgia, *Journal* said: "The aged Marshal heard the news of the assassination attempt Wednesday night while attending a special rendition in his honor of the first act of the opera 'Faust,' in which the aging Faust makes a pact with the devil." . . . Jay Allen, the writer who spent several months in a Nazi jail in Paris, has started a private campaign to have the key of the Bastille, presented to General Washington by Lafayette, sent back to Marshal Pétain.

THE ANGLO-SAXON FEDERATION, headed by W. J. Cameron, Henry Ford's public-relations' chief, and one of the oldest native-fascist, anti-Semitic organizations, is still a going concern. It will hold its convention at Grand Rapids, Michigan, in mid-October, and the featured speaker will be Boake Carter.

AN ANONYMOUS anti-interventionist group has been sending out postcards making its own use of the "V" symbol. The message reads: "These Vain Visionaries would send our Valiant Vanguard to Africa's Vilely Vicious clime, Victimized by Verminous Voracious insects, Venomous snakes, Vitiating, Voodooed, etc., etc.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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A Native at Large

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

For Non-Sectarian Recreation

I KNOW it is not nice to criticize the good people. Anybody who has ever practiced small-town journalism knows that the most unproductive enterprise possible is to criticize the preachers and their friends. But having stuck my neck out once before about the U. S. O. by saying that in the defense towns its component organizations sometimes seem more interested in their own sects than in the soldiers, I'm sticking it out again.

One of the things this second world war is teaching us is that we did not learn much from the first one. Of course, we did learn. The elaborate lessons that we learned the hard way in 1917-18 are elaborately filed in Washington. But the same good people who made the first mistakes are so anxious to make them over again that it is almost impolite to suggest that anybody pay any attention to what sensible men put down about their own work at the end of the last war as a warning for the future. In this U. S. O. business, nevertheless, I want to put a witness on the stand. On June 1, 1919, Raymond B. Fosdick, who was in charge of the same sort of work in the army and navy during the last war, made a report on what he had learned. This report was not any secret when plans were made for providing recreation for soldiers and sailors and defense workers in this crisis. Mr. Fosdick wrote:

> As one who believes sincerely in the work of these societies [Y. M. C. A., Y. W., K. of C., Jewish Welfare Board, Salvation Army, etc.], I may perhaps be permitted a comment on the future development of the kind of work which they have been conducting. I have come increasingly to the belief, in two years of intimate association with this work, that the sectarian basis underlying much of it is fundamentally wrong. None of the societies, of course, works exclusively for its own constituency. Their facilities and privileges are open to all regardless of faith, but the auspices through which those privileges are extended are in some cases sectarian. The tendency of this arrangement is to stimulate rivalries and a jockeying for position that are disheartening to witness. . . . Even were competition utterly eliminated, sectarian divisions in work of this kind are unfortunate. To have Protestant huts, Catholic huts, and Jewish huts in the same camp or operating in the same area not only is wrong in principle but represents a waste of overhead and a duplication of personnel, even when the total volume of the work thus carried on is necessary. No one resents this thing more than the troops themselves. A baseball is a baseball to the soldiers no matter whether it is presented by the Y. M. C. A., the Knights of Columbus, or the Jewish Welfare Board. The same is true of huts, chocolate, entertainment, stationery, or good advice.

In this regard certainly the young in service have not changed from one war to another. Unfortunately, however, the sectarians have not changed much either. They united for collecting but are separating as rapidly as possible for spending. And the results are not only wasteful of money meant for soldiers, but destructive of the true local unity developing in some defense centers.

"Somebody ought to say something quickly," one of the federal government's own officials in an important defense center told me recently, "about the growing conflict between good community organization and the 'taking-over' process of U. S. O. In numerous communities in defense areas the U. S. O. through sheer 'jackpot' power is nullifying the rich local effort by a suave offer to 'take over' the service centers, the expense of operation, etc. Few town councils can resist this bait, even though they thereby lose all local control. There is actually no U. S. O. control either, despite the last-minute compulsion to send out a U. S. O. field staff (not affiliated with the separate agency budgets). All actual control, despite the 'holding-company' aspect of national U. S. O. in finance, local budgets, personnel, and agency policy lies with the national offices of the six separate agencies."

He shook his head: "It is time the country was warned about what is happening before it is too late."

I don't think it is too late. The U. S. O. will ask again—and it will ask again presumably for the welfare of the men and not for the welfare of the organizations. Maybe it is too late to take advantage of Mr. Fosdick's informed advice and set up a system by which the men will be served as men by Americans and not as Catholics, Protestants, or Jews by organizations of Catholics, Protestants, or Jews. But it is not too late for the growth of insistence that the word "united" in the U. S. O. mean what it says: a unity spreading out to the soldiers in their service and not merely a meeting in New York of the big shots of good works to get more money to divide and spend separately. To the country such a unity begins to look phony, and if it is, U. S. O. will begin to look like a phony cause. Nobody wants to see that happen, but if it is not going to happen, the unity in the advertising must get beyond the collection plates into the camp towns That's where it belongs.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Here's a War Correspondent!

NO OTHER ROAD TO FREEDOM. By Leland Stowe. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

ONE day in July, 1937, Lee Stowe walked into my office in Madrid. He brought accurate news about the state of public opinion in the outside world and a large quantity of excellent English bacon. There's a war correspondent for you! But Stowe, I soon discovered, had more to his credit than bacon—and a Pulitzer prize. He was not a military expert and he was not a political theorist; yet in a few days he had formed a remarkably just opinion concerning the war. And he was not repeating the opinions of others, for his views differed sharply from those that were conventional in Madrid. It was, I realized, the vigor and directness of the man and his fundamental moral simplicity which enabled him to push through the jungle of propaganda and theory.

The same qualities are evident in this invigorating book. At times I disagree, at my risk, with some of his judgments, as in his estimate of the extent of fifth-column activity in Norway. Yet, speaking of Norway, I know also how profound was the effect in England of Stowe's reporting of British muddling in the Norwegian campaign. And looking back on the early stages of the present conflict, anyone can see that the cardinal political fact of the war at that time was the incompetence and unparalleled lack of vision of the Chamberlain government. However bitter and indignant a war correspondent may have been over that campaign, it was his job, and his duty, to report the facts. And Stowe, by hard work and not a little daring, got at the facts. In all sobriety one may say that his article, the publication of which was delayed in London, had a great deal to do with the awakening of British opinion and thus with the downfall of the fumbling defeatists who were losing the war. I still think that story was the best piece of work Stowe has done to date. In his book he amplifies and drives home the lesson, which now concerns Americans more than Britishers.

The horror and sheer unreason of the Russo-Finnish war are well described in a chapter fittingly entitled Goodby to Reason. The only sound political basis for resistance to Nazism is the struggle for national liberty, which Stalin's stupid aggression obscured. Stowe's fine description of Finnish morale hammers home the point. Had that superb fighting spirit been utilized on the right side, as well it might have been, Leningrad and the world might stand in less jeopardy today.

From Norway Stowe went to the neurotic Balkans, thence to Greece. That campaign, which shattered Italian morale and turned Italy into an occupied country, provides material for the most gripping part of the book. Again, contrary to all pseudo-leftist reckoning, a semi-totalitarian country was possessed of fiery spirit. Upon the evidence here presented I should say Greece was rather like Spain. A national temperament that had invited the derision of northern Europeans and made Greek indolence and talkativeness something of a folk theme in Europe was found to possess incomparable strength. And the loudest and most argumentative of the talkers, as in Spain, turned out to be the best fighters! Reading Stowe, one realizes that it was only the Arctic weather of those chaotic hills of northern Greece which saved Mussolini from immediate disaster and gave Hitler time to prepare his campaign. The Greeks, Stowe writes, knew they would have to reckon with Berlin, but that did not paralyze them. Again, the lesson is for this country.

A good journalist must acquire a massive sophistication, yet he must at the same time keep the essential simplicity which permits him to be excited, and astonished, by reality. The last chapter of "No Other Road to Freedom" records Stowe's astonishment upon returning to his own country. He had gone to Europe an isolationist, not, it is true, of the thoroughgoing kind, but one who believed that America had no very active role to play in the war. He returned a forthright interventionist and expected to find public opinion well informed, thoughtful, and resolute. Instead, he met the alarming reality.

Mr. Stowe devotes the last chapters of his book to the exposition of his views, arguing powerfully that a democratic victory over Nazism depends entirely upon the will of this country. He has a reasoned faith in Anglo-American victory, provided we do not continue to make Chamberlain's mistakes. "Unless we win at home, our armed men will never be victorious, wherever they may fight," Stowe says. The war must not be considered as primarily a military fact. Isolationists and interventionists alike think too much of making America safe, as France did, by means of armaments. The determination not merely to maintain but to improve democratic institutions must be the foundation stone of American intervention—a sound conclusion to a lively and exciting book.

RALPH BATES

Using the Past

THE GROUND WE STAND ON. By John Dos Passos. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

THE best that can be said about a history which is otherwise sound is that it reads like a novel, so that if ever a fine novelist should turn his talents to historical writing, both the professional guild and the public should rejoice. Especially in these days, as Mr. Dos Passos points out in his Introduction, we need a clear, purposive view of the past, of our own past in particular, for comfort and guidance. "The Ground We Stand On" is thus a title that admirably expresses the importance of tradition, known or unknown, and the book itself was designed to make a few chosen moments of that tradition vivid for mature readers. The author has studied in detail the lives and times of Roger Williams, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Joel Barlow, and Alexander Hamilton—among others—and he

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has sought to weld his information into a narrative that might shed light on the principles of freedom, self-government, and equity which form, in another sense, the ground we stand on.

So excellent is this intention and so complete my sympathy with the aims and talents of the author that it grieves me to have to call the book a failure. It is a failure of point of view, of technique, of proportion, of style; a disturbing failure which can be summed up in a word by saying that for the first time in my experience Mr. Dos Passos is dull. His 400 closely packed pages deal at length with some of the most exciting, the most naturally dramatic events of the last three centuries: portions of the Puritan, the French, and the American revolutions. Yet except here and there when handling a minor detail in a private life, his depiction remains as dead as a chromo and as incoherent as a kaleidoscope. In the long section devoted to Roger Williams, Mr. Dos Passos obviously had a subject well adapted to his powers—an individual career set against world events (Newsreel) and lighted up by the narrator's reflections (Camera Eye). But until nearly the last of these 130 pages Williams remains a blurred and indifferent figure, crushed by the weight of irrelevant detail concerning James I, Sir Edward Coke, Raleigh, Milton, and the Cromwellians. As for these great personages, they form a gallery, not a drama; and around them the mass of petty facts turned up during research clutters the ground without adding solidity or character to the scene.

It might be enough to stop here and record merely an unsuccessful venture detracting nothing from past achievement, if the whole question of the use of history were not explicitly raised and answered by the author and his work. Many books have already appeared professing to show us the genesis of our troubles or the meaning of our traditions; many more are to come. What tests can we apply to them? Power of synthesis is surely the first; then comes sharpness of analysis. After reading Mr. Dos Passos, it is impossible—though his subtitle is "examples from the history of a political creed"—to tell what courses of political action he thinks valid. He comments fitfully and interprets with excessive generality. From frequent praise of the English Common Law, one gathers that he regards its spirit as fruitful of civil liberty and the ways of self-government. But he is unable to remain true to his belief—as who could be?—that Anglo-Saxon means "freedom" against Latin "authority." Indeed, the words "authoritarian," "law," "liberty," "power," which are the key words in his attempted demonstration, are used by him in accordance with what may be called textbook usage, that is to say, a jargon only one degree below journalese for looseness and misleading abstraction.

Most unsatisfactory of all is that doubtful entity, used by many besides Mr. Dos Passos, "the rising middle class." It should be "the forever rising middle class," whose buoyancy too readily explains every movement from the medieval guilds to the Reform Bill of 1832. Particular facts are not wanting, in this and other histories, to show how wars, marriages, dynastic falls, and revolutions affect not the form but the personnel of social groups; yet the facts and the empty categories remain separate. But how can social groups be treated historically? Mr. Dos Passos, for one, tends to dislike and discredit the holders of power and property. Yet when he comes to Jefferson—the most lovable of his chosen figures—he points out with a kind of surprise that the abundance of talents contributed by Virginia to the new federal government was probably due to the ease, security, patriarchal concern with slaves, and habit of management which the Virginia aristocracy possessed. Here, again, is no guiding thread to history, nor is it an argument in favor of aristocracy and slavery; but is it not an argument against the melodramarxist notion, linked with the idea of a "rising middle class," that virtue lies in disinheritance?

In the matter of form Mr. Dos Passos is no less at odds with himself. He has an artist's eye for the concrete and tries to tone up his narrative by spurts of "effective" writing and sudden descents into colloquialism and slang. But the past cannot be made to live again by a mere touch of familiarity. In an author whose legitimate ambition is to make history clear, useful, compelling, these defects are not trifles. Taken together, they argue a want of standard by which to select, and a want of philosophy by which to organize, the endless materials of any history. There is, in short, neither the analytic nor the synthetic power required.

Mr. Dos Passos rightly says that as a nation we lack the historical sense, and it is obvious that it can be cultivated only by studying or reading history. But reading with vacant minds will not yield us what we want, nor will picturesque detail unsupported by the reflective imagination fill the mind. I think I find a clue to Mr. Dos Passos's jumbled historicism in the bibliographical notes, where he says, quite truly, that the early American historians—Randall, Parton, Tucker, Sparks—are, with all their faults, better than their successors. But he adds soon after that Parrington's "Main Currents" is the only work comparable in scope and imagination to that of the British liberal historians. Now Parrington's industry and high average worth are undoubted. His disastrous lack is lack of imagination—about ideas, about art, about life. In the end, it is only imagination applied to the past that can free us from the trammels of scholasticism, of dull prejudices, of meaningless clichés, and so give us the historical sense.

JACQUES BARZUN

Speaking with a French Accent

THEY SPEAK FOR A NATION: LETTERS FROM FRANCE. Edited by Eve Curie, Philippe Barrès, and Raoul de Roussy de Sales. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.

FRANCE ON BERLIN TIME. By Thomas Kernan. J. B. Lippincott Company. $2.75.

A WOMAN IS WITNESS: A PARIS DIARY. By Ernst Lothar. Translated by Barrows Mussey. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

ALMOST everything that comes out of enslaved Europe these days is bound to be interesting. As one who has for months been broadcasting twice weekly to the French people, I find particularly fascinating the reports that issue from France, for they help me to gauge the state of mind of the invisible audience that tunes in on the B. B. C. Here is a group of such reports, especially valuable because of the widely divergent points of view they represent. One is a collection of sincere and often deeply moving letters

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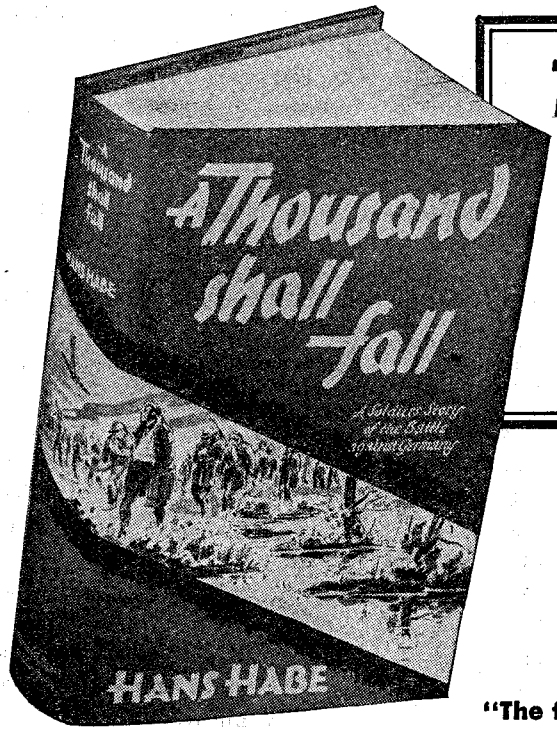

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THE GROUND WE STAND ON

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written by French men and women from both zones to the British and American radio stations which are their only contact with the outside world. The second is an eyewitness account of France under the iron heel, written by an intelligent American publisher very familiar with French life. The third is the work of an Austrian refugee who spent several years in France.

All three volumes offer authentic reports on the state of the French nation. But Ernst Lothar's novel, because it is a novel, has the authenticity of fiction, which, according to Aristotle, is greater than that of history. His Austrian Catholic heroine—who tells her own story in her diary—comes to Paris at the time of the *Anschluss,* loves and marries a French journalist, sees him off to the Maginot Line, receives him when he returns to die in her arms, and then herself dies before a Nazi firing squad. As a contrasting background for her tender romance with Pierre Durand the author has used the somber events of 1939 and 1940—much as Martin du Gard in "Summer, 1914," made his picture of France on the verge of another war more profoundly stirring by the contrast of Jacques' and Jenny's breathless love. But the almost inevitable comparison with "The Thibaults" crushes Lothar's novel, which fails to communicate a convincing impression of life. The deficiency can be traced in great part to the excessively representative aspect of the heroine's experiences. She comes in contact with the Paris law courts and the Gestapo, she knows people in both the German and American embassies, she spots Nazi spies and fifth columnists before the defeat, she witnesses a suicide at the American Hospital which is a ringer for that of Dr. Thierry de Martel, she meets Himmler and even talks with Hitler on the steps of the Pantheon! And don't forget that the story ends with her court martial. Oh, this is fiction all right, and yet in the main lines the picture it paints is true. But I don't think Aristotle was speaking of just this kind of fiction.

From her father's book on the Nazis, Ernst Lothar's heroine quotes a sentence which might serve as epigraph to Thomas Kernan's "France on Berlin Time": "The whole race theory and world concept of the Nazis is a mere cynical fraud, planned and executed in order *legally* to blackmail, plunder, and murder their competitors wherever they are." Mr. Kernan, publisher of the Paris *Vogue,* saw the Germans doing just that, and he vividly describes the process and its results in France. His description of the financial manipulations of conquest based on the Reichskreditkassen is the clearest I have seen anywhere, and the chapter on the Propaganda Bureau and its now brutal, now subtle maneuvers is especially rich in personal experiences. In general surprisingly objective and calm, Mr. Kernan becomes bitter on the subject of the French teachers and doctors. Since his facts are doubtless true, one can understand his bitterness.

All three books speak with a French accent. Mr. Kernan has the special syntax and Gallic idioms, charming when unconsciously used, that mark the American who has made his home in France. Likewise the little Austrian-French girl often translates her thoughts from French. The letters of "They Speak for a Nation," very carelessly translated, abound in expressions like "the old marshal who takes care of himself at Vichy," "the United States range themselves," "dirty hinged-cross rags," and a hundred others strange to anyone who does not know French. But this only adds to our impression of their genuineness: they sound like letters which a friend might read to us aloud, translating as he goes. Classified under such headings as Life in Paris, The Hardships of Material Life, The Vichy Government, England, America, the many letters provide a cross-section of French opinion on the questions most vital to the French. From women, school children, nurses, office workers, officers in the colonial army, farmers, and refugees, they tell the same story of courage and hope, while permitting one to read between the lines a tale of immense suffering and privation and shame and bewilderment. In the eighteenth century Vauvenargues wrote that "servitude debases men to the point of making them love it." But these people will never accept the fate of slaves. This collection of letters proves, if nothing else does, that the few who embrace their conquerors are anomalies. Though the temptation to quote is very great, I shall limit myself to the exhortation to the outside world of a man in the unoccupied zone: "Let each one of those not yet engaged in the military struggle consecrate a part of his time, his activity, his means to aid in warding off one of the most terrible scourges that ever menaced humanity."

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

T-Squares and Trailers

THIS BUSINESS OF ARCHITECTURE. By Royal Barry Wills. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation. $2.75.

MOBILE HOMES, A STUDY OF TRAILER LIFE. By Donald Olen Cowgill. Washington: American Council on Public Affairs. $2.

"THIS BUSINESS OF ARCHITECTURE" might better have been called "The Confessions of a Successful Architect." Speaking straight from the shoulder, Wills declares that an architect can make a good living without knowing much about architecture—so long as he has a good business head. Aside from understanding certain fundamentals about contracts, budgeting, and overhead, the man behind the T-square must absorb the basic principles of stalking, capturing, and satisfying clients. Wills's hints on stalking and capturing range from radio talks to store-window exhibits, from becoming a civic leader to playing poker with prospective clients instead of business competitors. Clients are satisfied, Wills explains in detail and through amusing line drawings, by the architect's "getting the house inside the pocket-book," by being humored when they offer suggestions, and by being given modernistic houses that look like Gothic castles, if that is what they want.

Wills avoids some of the basic business problems that face American architects. He says nothing about architects on government pay rolls. He steers clear of the suggestion of the American Institute of Architects that the architect try to assume wider responsibilities and become the coordinator and head of the building operation. Nevertheless, his book is required reading not only for prospective architects but for all those who may some day shop around for the right architect. With Wills's book under your belt, you will have a better idea of the difficulties an architect labors under and

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not expect too much. You will also know how to humor him when he offers suggestions.

The second book presents the most comprehensive study to date of the American trailer, the motor age's dramatic challenge to both the home and the architect. A few years ago Roger W. Babson predicted that half the population would be living in trailers within two decades. Cowgill is more conservative. His outside estimate is 15 per cent. Although even this would have profound effects upon the entire housing industry, the prospect does not frighten him. As a sociologist, he is pleased to find that trailerites are generally well educated, go to church, and vote regularly. Although they usually pay no direct taxes in the communities they visit, they spend money earned elsewhere and should be welcomed as community assets rather than greeted with icy hostility. With the exception of some extra irritation caused by cramped quarters, says Cowgill, the family life of trailerites appears to be quite normal and stable. Sociologists should therefore be more cautious in evaluating mobility as a disorganizing factor.

Editorial writers have been fond of imagining what would happen if architects and builders would only give us a streamlined house that could be run off a conveyor belt like a trailer. Then, the story goes, we would really have low-cost housing. One of the troubles with this parallel is that we still haven't got low-cost trailers. Show people are about the only low-income people using them. The defense program has broken this price barrier by ushering in subsidized, public trailer camps. Trailers are the super-panzers of defense housing, being rushed to sectors of the industrial front where the housing shortage must be cracked without delay. It is to be hoped that Cowgill will continue his study by exploring the new problems raised by the defense trailer.

BERTRAM M. GROSS

Hegel and Liberalism

REASON AND REVOLUTION: HEGEL AND THE RISE OF SOCIAL THEORY. By Herbert Marcuse. Oxford University Press. $3.75.

WITH the exception of Nietzsche none of the great German philosophers has fared so badly at the hands of posterity as Hegel. In contrast to the current misinterpretation of Hegel as the prophet and inspirer of the totalitarian state and of fascism, Dr. Marcuse emphasizes the fundamental critical and revolutionary impulses which drove the young Hegel to philosophy and determined both the substance and the form of his ideas.

The author sets out to demonstrate from Hegel's early theological, historical, and political writings that his philosophical beginnings had their source in contemporary political events as much as in philosophical considerations and were animated by an acute consciousness of the inner contradictions of contemporary liberal society, a consciousness which found its philosophical expression in the antinomic structure of his new dialectic. The further Hegel progressed in his work, however, the more his growing accommodation to his time led him to forsake this critical and revolutionary attitude and the more he was satisfied with the mere intellectual "abolition" of the contradictions of liberal society within the framework of his system. When, therefore, after his death Karl Marx took up his ideas with the claim that philosophy, having found its consummation in Hegel's system, had come to an end, and would have to abdicate in favor of its application to social reality, he was in fact returning to the original attitude of Hegel and fulfilling the real purposes of Hegel's negative, dialectical philosophy.

While Hegel's philosophy and its critical tendencies found fulfilment in Marx's materialistic dialectic—which preserved and fulfilled it precisely by transposing it to the practical plane—other attempts to grapple with the social issues of capitalist society developed in violent opposition to Hegel; above all the manifold shades of positivism, which, by their repudiation of any comprehensive philosophical system or critical evaluation of present society and their blind admiration of brute facts, constituted themselves avowed or unavowed apologists of the existing order and ended in a colorless neutral science of sociology modeled upon the natural sciences. In recent years this antagonism between positivism and the critical spirit of Hegel's philosophy of reason has flamed up again in the violent denunciation of his ideas by leading Nazi educationalists, who have thus shown themselves more acutely conscious of the real Hegel than their fascist colleagues.

Within the narrow scope of this review it is impossible to do justice to the wealth of erudition with which the author expounds his thesis or to discuss the many and intriguing issues he raises, such as the question whether the contradictions revealed by the dialectic structure of Hegelian philosophy are indeed, as he claims, an expression of the perversity of present capitalistic society, due to disappear with its abolition in the classless state of the future, or, as the present reviewer is inclined to believe, a permanent characteristic of all human activity and society.

Dr. Marcuse's endeavor to combine the exposition of his

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thesis with a complete reinterpretation of Hegel has tended to prevent him from doing full justice to either, and it would probably have been better if, assuming a general acquaintance with Hegel on the part of his readers, he had devoted his whole effort to elucidating his main line of argument. As it stands, much of his exposition of the general development of Hegel's thought has little bearing upon the central argument and merely serves to obscure it, while, on the other hand, such an important point as his claim that Hegel's system formed the philosophical expression of *liberal* society remains a mere assertion which one would like to see elaborated. Such a restriction of the first part to its central theme would at the same time have reduced the present disproportion between it and the subsequent analysis of Hegel's successors and opponents in the development of social theory and given more scope to the trenchant criticism of positivism and of its divorcement from the guiding hand of philosophy which forms perhaps the most brilliant part of the whole. (Compare Jacques Barzun's simultaneous onslaught in his recent book "Darwin, Marx, Wagner," in which Mr. Barzun, ignoring Marx's Hegelian foundations, arrays Marx *with* instead of against positivism.) It might also have provided more space for the final chapter, on Hegel's fate under the ax of fascism, which in its present form is the least satisfactory section of the book.

HERBERT ROSINSKI

WHAT GOES ON IN EUROPE?

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***The* NATION**
55 Fifth Avenue **New York, N. Y.**

Romantic Adventure

THE SUN IS MY UNDOING. By Marguerite Steen. The Viking Press. $3.

SWEEP, speed, and extravagance are the outstanding qualities of Marguerite Steen's roistering historical novel of the Gold Coast days, when Englishmen still engaged in the slave trade and poor Uncle Tom was generations away. First the sheer physical bulk of the book, almost twelve hundred pages, strikes one, then the multiplicity of characters and places, and lastly the rough and tumble of action, incident piled on incident. Miss Steen seems to have so much material that she just skims the top of the plot, passing over details which might themselves have been whipped up into novels.

The opening chapter is compounded of greed and intrigue, with death or murder stalking an old man on a sickbed on the night that handsome young Matthew Flood came home and put on a cock fight leading to a scandal that ran down through the years in Bristol. Matthew Flood is a hero suited to the tale; his motives and actions are in the straight romantic-adventure vein. Whether he is loving the delicately beautiful Pallas, whose moral indignation at the slave trade is a little in advance of the time, or the alluring black barbarian Sheeba, who is troubled by no morals at all, he is the devil-may-care, swashbuckling hero to whom action is the breath of life, and let the stay-at-homes do the thinking.

Bristol, hard, bright, and money loving, opens and closes the story, but the great middle section of the book deals with Matthew's exploits in the African slave trade and his luxurious dissipations in Havana, where in the spirit of insolent travesty he goes through a marriage ceremony with his black mistress. The scenes of wreck and carnage, the horrors of the death-infested slave ships, the picture of men at the very edge of endurance are not what you might expect from a woman novelist. Or perhaps you would. Miss Steen has infused both her story and her hero with the dark, hypnotic power that has marked a good many of the men created by women both before and since Charlotte Brontë thought up Rochester. And when hero turns into heroine—not along the involved lines of Virginia Woolf's Orlando—there is no letdown in the excitement of incident and passion. The daughter of the English slaver and the African slave transmits to *her* daughter enough of both to make her strange company when she returns to Bristol for her triumphs.

"The Sun Is My Undoing" is really no book to be reviewed. It sets out to tell a tall tale and it does so with enthusiasm. Yarns like this are to be read, not discussed.

GRAHAM BATES

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IN BRIEF

LOOKING FOR TROUBLE. By Virginia Cowles. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

It is a hard assignment for a journalist at this date to write a "different" book about the same crises, but Miss Cowles achieves it. Furthermore, though she is intimate with all the "right" people in cosmopolitan society, she is also on the right side, perhaps because as a young American employed as correspondent by the London *Sunday Times* and *Daily Telegraph* she has never lost a certain detachment from the glittering circles in which she moves. By social as much as by journalistic wire-pulling she has managed to come face to face with Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain, and a host of other key men of various degrees of importance. Miss Cowles also did a great deal of difficult traveling under conditions of severe hardship. She gives the impression of being as faithful a reporter as is humanly possible; but being human and having apparently finished her book before the recent Soviet-German break, she slipped up slightly on Russia.

DANIEL DE LEON, SOCIAL ARCHITECT. By Arnold Petersen. New York Labor News Company. $2.50.

This collection of essays and addresses on De Leon's contributions to Marxian science, which the author does not put second to Lenin's, suffers from two kinds of repetition. Prepared for various occasions, they perhaps inevitably cover the same ground more than once; written in a spirit of violent partisanship, in their monotonous denunciation of everyone who has ever differed in the slightest degree from the author or his hero they almost achieve caricature of the family quarrels which have discredited the sectarians of the extreme left in the eyes of ordinary rational liberals. This is a pity, for De Leon was a remarkable man in many ways.

THE CHARACTER OF HAMLET AND OTHER ESSAYS. By John Erskine Hankins. University of North Carolina Press. $3.

A long essay on the main subject is supplemented by seven which document and elaborate various aspects of the problem. The author is well up on Hamlet studies, offers a few thoughtful suggestions of his own, and writes pleasantly enough, though like most professors of English he dilutes and weakens his effect by thesis-like factual glosses where an ordinary educated writer or reader would be satisfied with an allusion.

GROWING UP IN THE BLACK BELT. By Charles S. Johnson. Washington: American Council on Education. $2.25.

This is a study of personality development among Negro youth prepared for the American Youth Commission by the head of the Social Science Department of Fisk University. Based on the most up-to-date tests supplemented by personal interviews, it is a very useful document for the record, even if the conclusions were already well known to many who are not sociologists.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PIERCE. Selected writings. Edited by Justus Buchler. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

Mr. Buchler's earlier study of Pierce's empirical philosophy fully qualifies him to edit this volume of selections, for which there is genuine need. For "Chance, Love, and Logic," edited by Morris Cohen and published before the appearance of the six volumes of "Collected Papers," not only fails to represent the whole range of Pierce's thought as completely as the present volume but is no longer in print. This volume contains as much as anyone but the specialist on Pierce is likely to need, and is headed by a very compact and lucid introduction. Because it is no longer possible to know about contemporary American culture without reckoning with Pierce's influence on its philosophy, Mr. Buchler has rendered scholarship a valuable service in editing these selections.

DRAMA

Dissertation

WHEN the late Alan Dale or, for that matter, the late William Winter, faced a play like "Village Green" (Henry Miller Theater), his problem was simple. He could describe it as "wholesome" and "homey," secure in the conviction that this was, and would be taken to be, high praise. He could even call the central character "lovable" and congratulate himself upon having discovered the *mot juste*. But things are not quite so simple today. Not only are the words worn out; the ideas behind them are under suspicion. And besides, we do not take claptrap as inevitably the basis of any workable theatrical action.

Only seventeen years ago when I took over this column, about the time that Alan Dale and William Winter were passing to whatever rest a drama critic earns, my own problem would have been almost as simple as theirs. I should have been, or at least managed to get, quite righteously angry. Such a play I should have felt was treason against the Modern Theater; or if not a deliberate attempt to sabotage advanced thought, at least a criminal waste of stage space that might otherwise be used to some good purpose. I might have lamented in passing the waste of so good an actor as Frank Craven on so hokey a part, but I should have spent more time drawing an indignant parallel between "Village Green" and "An Enemy of the People." This New Hampshire lawyer who quite unexpectedly finds himself a champion of liberalism because his daughter's beau paints a nude figure in a mural for the Town Hall is, I should have said, merely a Yankee Dr. Stockman who finally wins out instead of finally losing everything except his own soul. And this shamelessly manipulated happy end has the effect, I should have concluded, of perverting the whole thing. It makes the play soothing instead of tonic. The moral is not that brave men are scarce but rather that the country is full of village Hampdens sure to triumph in the last act, and that therefore we may all go home to pleasant dreams.

But this is neither the heyday of Alan Dale and William Winter nor so much as seventeen years ago. I still think "An Enemy of the People" is a better play, but I realize that even the author of "Village Green" may possibly think so too, and I can't work up any particular indignation. This may possibly be due merely to increasing age and the attendant sluggishness of the adrenal gland, but the fact that people are less likely now than they were once to make such a piece the occasion for a discourse on the superiority of good old-fashioned sentiment over new-fangled acrimony may have something to do with it also. Plays like "Village Green" are the ones on the defensive today, and it makes me generous. I can admit that I enjoyed it mildly myself and that I accepted tolerantly the creaking at the joints as the plot extended itself. Of course I could make some cracks. I could say, for instance, that though it is the author's first produced play, he is obviously thoroughly familiar with dramatic literature, especially that of the recent past. Or I

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could remark that Mr. Craven, who recently declared the stage no longer what it used to be, is doing everything possible to disprove his own contention. I could even elaborate a textile metaphor involving homespun that looks more like shoddy. But I won't.

And Mr. Craven really is a very fine actor—a joy to watch because of the sureness with which he uses a thousand little gestures and a thousand little flickers of expression which one must look close to be aware of but which make him a living figure no matter how dead the material he is struggling with. In fact, the whole cast is human and credible, and so for that matter is a good deal of the dialogue. What we learned commentators call the manners of the play seem quite authentic. Only the fable is completely cooked up and unconvincing.

During the early 1900's the commonest criticism leveled at the theater was that there were no plays which an intelligent man could accept without condescension. More recently the commonest criticism has been that there were no plays one could take his grandmother to. "Village Green" supplies that lack, though most of the grandmothers I know would regard it as a bit on the sweet side. My guess is, however, that it will enjoy quite a pleasant little success not by any means due entirely to the patronage of the aged.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RECORDS

THE Budapest Quartet, which is to play all of Beethoven's string quartets at the Y. M. H. A. again this season, is now broadcasting the works for the Columbia Broadcasting System Sunday mornings at 11:05. For me the first broadcast on August 31 had two advantages over the concerts: I could hear the performances undisturbed by the restlessness of an audience; and I was offered only two Beethoven quartets instead of the concert's three or four—which is to say that no more was demanded of my powers of concentration than they were capable of even under these favorable conditions. Moreover, the fifty-five-minute period was sufficient for Op. 18 No. 1 and Op. 135 in their entirety; and the transmission from Washington provided excellent reproduction of the Budapest group's always newly incredible playing. If C. B. S. does as well in the later broadcasts—if, above all, it assigns enough time for the works, instead of following the standard broadcasting practice that N. B. C. followed with the Primrose Quartet's Beethoven broadcasts, of hacking out portions of the works to fit them into the initially assigned period of time—the series will be one of the most notable in broadcasting history.

My August 2 article on the earnings of union and non-union symphony orchestra musicians, with its incidental reference to composers' royalties, has brought a letter from a member of the music department of an eastern college about the difficulties which composers have in getting their music published and performed; and at one point my correspondent writes: "Recently I had occasion to present over the radio several programs of modern American music and I wished to include the piano works of the head of the piano department in one of our largest universities. I selected four numbers which he had published himself, since publishers will not consider works of serious merit. The radio station asked him to sign a release for the performance, but since this release was so worded that the station had the right to record, cut, alter or use the works in any manner it wished he checked further into the release contract. It provided that for one dollar he relinquished all rights to the number and not only did the station (one of the largest) expect him to accept this amount, but it wished to include all four numbers in the one agreement: 25 cents for each number which had cost him not only considerable time and labor to produce, but had set him back at least $50 each for printing. And for 25 cents [each] he was to relinquish all rights to the numbers. Naturally the radio station disavowed any intention of infringing on the composer's rights, but a written contract is still a legal document. The pieces were not performed."

The fight between ASCAP and the broadcasting chains revealed in ASCAP's functioning some serious injustices in the apportioning of royalty revenues among the members, and other abuses affecting both members and non-members; but it was obvious that the chains' talk about these injustices and abuses was utter hyprocrisy, and that the only justice they were concerned with was the one to themselves of paying the composer as little for the use of his music as they could get away with; and how little that might be, if he were not protected by ASCAP, is indicated by my correspondent's letter. Without even investigating the exact figures I am sure that BMI, which the broadcasters set up to compete with ASCAP, pays its composers more than the amounts he mentions; but just as the anti-union Boston Symphony trustees might be less generous if there were no union in other cities to set schedules of pay which must be matched to keep the union away from the Boston Symphony, so BMI probably would not pay the composer what it does pay him if there were no ASCAP to compete with.

Among the few September releases of Victor which have reached me thus far is a new set (801, $5.50) of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3, with Iturbi playing the solo part and conducting the Rochester Philharmonic from the piano. I like the effect of Iturbi's style of piano-playing as little in Beethoven as in Mozart, and prefer the music as it is played with simplicity and strength by Schnabel in Victor Set 194. And even the one thing the new set might offer—superior recording—it does not have: on a large, wide-range machine the recorded sound of the Schnabel performance has a depth and warmth—in addition to excellent fidelity and clarity—that are in welcome contrast to the hard, thin, sharp sound of the Iturbi performance (this sound, and the similar hardness and harshness of other recordings, seem to confirm the statement made to me by an engineer that outside of Camden Victor, like Columbia, records on acetate instead of wax). On a small machine the limited frequency range produces a sound that is more agreeable.

Dvorak's String Quintet Op. 97 (Set 811, $4.50) I do not find interesting; and the Prague String Quartet and an assisting second violist play it with musical understanding but with no great beauty of tone. My review copy had several surfaces with noisy defects indicating poor processing.

On the other hand we get a fine set (803, $3.50) of two interesting early works of Berlioz, the "Francs-Juges" and "King Lear" Overtures, well played by Boult with the B. B. C. Symphony. Tovey demonstrates that the second work has no connection with Shakespeare's tragedy: "What Berlioz has achieved is exactly what he has attempted: a magnificent piece of orchestral rhetoric in tragic style. . . . Let us frankly call this overture the Tragedy of the Speaking Basses, of the Plea of the Oboe, and of the Fury of the Orchestra."

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Newspaper Guild Politics

Dear Sirs: You put the head "On Using Troops in Strikes" on Milton Kaufman's letter in your issue of August 23. That was kind to Mr. Kaufman, a candidate for reelection as executive vice-president of the American Newspaper Guild. But it wasn't the subject: the letter was a canny campaign broadside, for newspapermen who read *The Nation.*

This is the point: As national executive of the Guild, Kaufman, last June, wired local Guild presidents urging them to take a stand on the outlaw strike at the North American Aviation plant. Not on its outlaw-ness; Kaufman doesn't like to discuss that. He wanted newspapermen to overlook that issue, and simply to oppose the use of troops. Therein he revealed the essential irresponsibility which has made many of us turn against Kaufman and his associates. We don't like the use of troops to break strikes, but we hold Kaufmanesque labor tactics largely responsible for public acquiescence in the use of troops. And now, in your columns, Kaufman has the effrontery to whimper because Milton Murray, president of the Detroit Guild and opposition candidate for the presidency of the American Newspaper Guild, made his telegram public! What gall!

It is such evasion of issues, such reckless demagoguery, which encourages labor-baiters in Congress and fosters the psychology that uses troops in strikes. In union, and in unions, there may be strength; but there can be no strength without responsibility. So, since you have lent your columns to Kaufman's campaign, I beg leave to use them to urge newspaper workers who hate the use of troops in strikes to support the responsible, opposition-to-Kaufman's-group, Murray-Rogers-Eubanks pro-Guild ticket. LEWIS GANNETT

New York, August 29

Nazi Law and Justice

Dear Sirs: What Rustem Vambery says in "Hitler and the Decalogue," in *The Nation* of August 9, badly needed saying, and it needs constant, unremitting reiteration.

Whatever definition we choose for international law, no one can doubt that it is a manifestation of the belief that there is a higher morality than that of superior force. The long struggle to formulate a set of rules for international conduct and to put those rules into effect is evidence of the human, Christian striving of men to better themselves and their world. The Nazi attitude toward international law is just as clearly a manifestation of the decadent and degrading character, the essential barbarism, of Hitlerism.

If the fact that law as we know it does not and cannot exist in a Nazi world can be brought home to the people of this country, much will have been done to unify them in the determination to resist Hitlerism. We are so conditioned to a belief in law and order that most of us find it difficult to relate what we know about the working of Nazi "justice" to our own experience. Of course our laws are not perfect and our justice is frequently inequitable, but whenever manifestations of injustice come to our attention, we are indignant and ashamed. We have an ideal of law and justice, and we expect the reality to bear some relation to that ideal. To comprehend the real nature of Nazism we must become aware of the complete suppression of one of our most deeply cherished beliefs wherever the Nazis rule. JOSEPH E. JOHNSON

Williamstown, Mass., September 2

Confiscation Means Anarchy

Dear Sirs: I venture to call attention to some implications of the article by Nathaniel Peffer entitled Squeeze Japan Now, published in your issue of August 2. Among other proposals for carrying hostilities to Japan, Mr. Peffer makes the following statement:

> There must be complete non-intercourse—joint Anglo-American economic blockade at first, with the weapon of naval blockade held in reserve. If Japan retaliates by confiscating American property and assets in Japan and China, then Japanese property in this country should be confiscated, dollar for dollar. Whether Japanese assets in this country are greater or less than American assets in Japan or China is beside the point. America can afford the loss, while Japan cannot. Americans in the Far East whose property is expropriated can be compensated by being allotted pro rata the proceeds of the sale of Japanese property here. Thus domestic political complications can be avoided. It is manifestly unfair for certain groups to be penalized by the execution of a policy held to be in the national interest.

Without discussing Japanese-American relations, and apart from the fact that the sanctions policy advocated is recognized as inviting reprisals and war, the implications of confiscating private property deserve consideration. Not only is confiscation lawless and subversive of any reasonable hope of future order and peace, but adoption of the policy would hurt the United States infinitely more than Japan. Confiscation of foreign-owned private property strikes at the roots of international trade, international investment, and international law. It makes the safety of foreign investments dependent upon superiority in arms. The policy of confiscation, like the policy of embargo, arousing the instinct of self-preservation, is a powerful stimulus to conquest and self-sufficiency and to the cutting off or cutting down of international trade permanently. Even if it forced surrender in a particular instance, its long-run effects would still be ruinous to the Western nations. It is contagious, domestically and internationally.

The whole policy of sanctions makes ironic the suggestion for a post-war availability of raw materials to all nations. The monopoly of raw materials and the abuse of that monopoly may ultimately unite the disinherited countries against the sanctionists. The suggestion of confiscating private property of aliens invested in a country in good faith and in reliance on law is unwittingly a counsel of anarchy, and I fear it is anarchy that the policy of sanctions ultimately produces.

EDWIN BORCHARD

New Haven, Conn., August 27

Crime and Housing

Dear Sirs: We should like to praise, and confirm, Jonathan Daniels's article in *The Nation* of July 12 on crime and crowding in Washington, D. C.

The patriotic visitor to the capital would be appalled if he left the broad avenues and visited one of the back streets. He would find overcrowded, vermin-infested tenements in which oil lamps are the only means of lighting, the window panes have been broken out,

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REVIEWED BY REINHOLD NIEBUHR

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and the walls are cracked and peeling. Here Negro children are reared to face a hostile world.

These conditions, we feel, are not merely a boom-town problem, though the figures on Washington's recent amazing growth were required to bring them to the public eye. Nor are they found only in Washington. Crime accompanies them everywhere. We urge you to publish more articles on the same theme.

EDMOND AND DORIS ZASLOW

Tamiment, Pa., August 25

Can They Be for Hitler?

Dear Sirs: The attitude of our State Department with regard to immigration becomes less and less understandable and more and more disturbing. By the end of December the year 1941 will have witnessed the death of some 60,000 Jews in Eastern Europe from disease and starvation, with no relief in sight. Perhaps 250,000 Jews lost their lives as a direct result of the German invasion of Poland, the vast majority of them noncombatants. The lot of those who remain in German-controlled territory we know only too well.

Does the State Department keep a straight face when it says that out of these will come spies and saboteurs? The Jews of America will guarantee that not one who is brought to this country will become a public charge. Palestine, even today, is eager to receive them by the thousand. Those who are able will gladly join the armed forces of any country now doing battle with the Nazis.

The millions we are spending yearly to provide a mere sustenance for the suffering Jews of Europe could be used much more advantageously if a portion of them were brought here. How can the State Department think that they might be our enemies?

NORMAN H. DIAMOND

New Castle, Pa., September 2

One Way to Save Gasoline

Dear Sirs: There is a call to save gasoline and oil. There is an aggravated parking problem. There is an aggravated motor-accident problem. Too many automobiles are on the streets and roads, a large proportion driven by persons who lack the means and the financial responsibility they should have to operate automobiles. As a consequence, they drive dilapidated, unsafe cars and they carry no insurance; they cannot afford insurance and they have no fear of a judgment against them, because they are financially judgment-proof.

A not inconsiderable number of cars could be removed from circulation by requiring all drivers to carry adequate insurance as a condition of being granted a license. A law to this effect, under pressure of the present urgent need for conservation of gas and oil, could probably be more easily passed now than at any time before. Possibly the automobile manufacturers would be less likely to succeed now in blocking such legislation.

M. SCHULMAN

New York, September 4

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